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Support for police 'zero tolerance'

Clear beggars from streets, says Blair

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR has backed the use of aggressive policing tactics against homeless petty criminals as part of a drive to clear the streets of beggars, vagrants and people sleeping rough. The Labour leader has also admitted that he never gives money to beggars.

In an interview in this week's *Big Issue*, a magazine distributed by the homeless, Mr Blair supported the "zero tolerance" policy practised in New York where the police clamp down hard on aggressive beggars, graffiti artists, pickpockets and "squeegee merchants" who loiter at traffic lights waiting to wash car windcreens. A similar scheme is being tested at King's Cross, London.

Mr Blair also refused to guarantee homeless people the right to register to vote from day centres, and defended Labour's plans to withhold benefit from unemployed people who fail to take up a series of options.

Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, has already angered leftwingers by saying that a Labour government would reclaim the streets from "beggars, winos, addicts and squeegee merchants", and yesterday charities that help the homeless greeted Mr Blair's words with some dismay. John Bird, Editor of *The Big Issue*, accused the Labour leader of "a cosmetic exercise to swing round Tony voters" and suggested that the interview was intended to underline new Labour's tough approach to crime and criminals.

The "zero tolerance" scheme, which clamps down on offences that might previously have been considered "low-profile", has led to a 17 per cent reduction in crime in

New York. Asked by *The Big Issue* whether he supported such a policy, Mr Blair replied: "Yes I do. It is important that you say we don't tolerate the small crimes. It says you don't tolerate the graffiti on the wall."

Mr Blair also indicated that he would like to see as many homeless as possible moved off the streets altogether. They should be "dealt with properly, with a roof over their heads" and not shunted from one area to another. But he does not say whether Labour would provide more facilities.

Homeless people could be threatening, and it was important to deal with them, he said. "I often drop my kids off at the Tube and it's actually quite a frightening place for people. I'm saying we do have to make our streets safe for people," he said.

"Obviously some people will interpret this in a way which is harsh and unpleasant, but I think the basic principle is here to say: yes it is right to be intolerant of people homeless on the streets. But the way to deal with that is you make

sure that when those people come off the streets that you're doing the other part of the equation. You're providing them with somewhere to go."

Asked whether he gave money to beggars he said: "I don't. No. I do buy *The Big Issue* occasionally, but I don't put that in the same category."

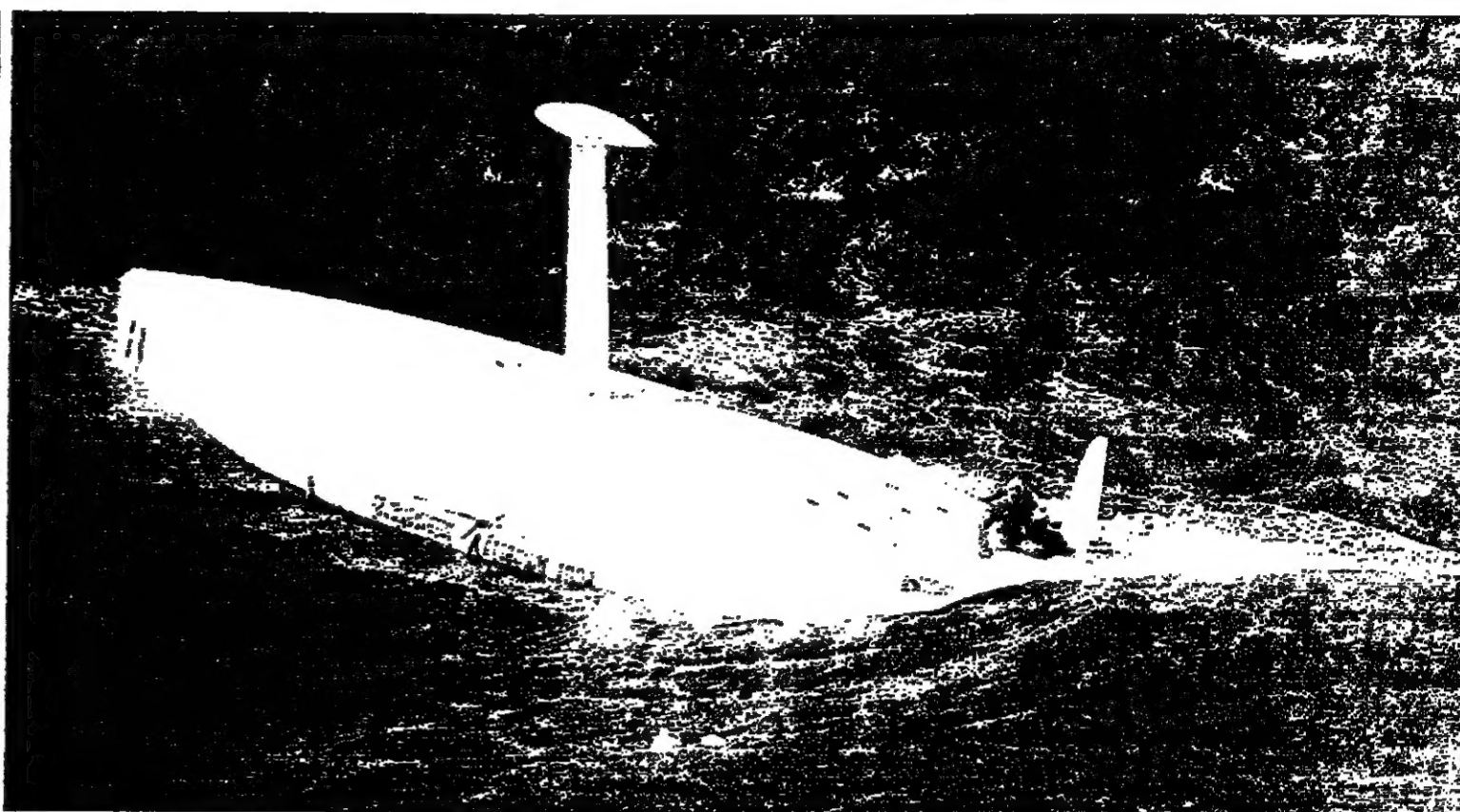
Mr Blair said it was appalling that there were young people sleeping in doorways, and that needed to be tackled but "not by saying this is something we tolerate, we give a pound or two to a beggar whenever we feel like it."

Organisations campaigning for the homeless have long demanded legal changes to make it easier for the homeless to vote. But Mr Blair refused to give any guarantees in this direction. He called for clearer guidelines to stop people registering twice, but did not suggest any changes to the law. "Certainly our intention is to review it in such a way so that, as far as possible, we prevent abuses of the system such as people registering in a number of different locations at the same time."

Charles dealing with homeless people responded cautiously to Mr Blair's remarks. Stephen Bromberg, of Crisis, said: "We need to offer people on the street help with their problems rather than simply putting them out of sight, which is what 'zero tolerance' tends to be about."

A spokeswoman for Shelter said she was glad Mr Blair was addressing the reasons why homelessness exists, but added that "zero tolerance" was an unfortunate phrase which suggested that the homeless might be marginalised and alienated even more.

US crime down, page 10



Thierry Dubois spotted by an Australian aircraft yesterday perched precariously on the upturned hull of his yacht in the Southern Ocean

Hopes rise for missing British sailor

By EDWARD GORMAN AND ROGER MAYNARD

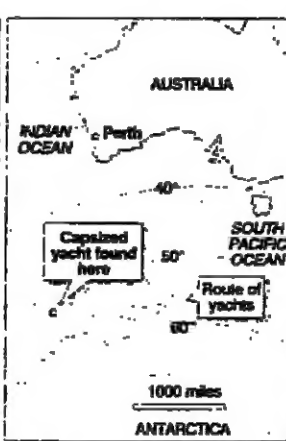
HOPES rose last night for a British solo yachtsman missing in the Southern Ocean after Australian authorities picked up a new manually activated distress signal seeming to confirm that he is alive.

Tony Bullimore, 57, an entrepreneur and experienced racing yachtsman from Bristol, was one of two competitors in the Vendée Globe single-handed non-stop round-the-world race who activated their satellite distress beacons on Sunday, when both yachts were hit by 50-knot winds and heavy seas about 1,400 miles southwest of Perth.

Mahees Alimchandani of the Maritime Rescue Centre in Canberra, which has organised the rescue operation, said: "A beacon has been activated now in an alarm mode. Prior to this, the beacon was activated in what is called a normal mode, which immediately suggests that there is someone there who has changed the switch, probably as an indication that 'Hey, I'm here, and don't write me off'. So we're pretty certain that



Tony Bullimore, left, the British yachtsman who is still unsighted and M Dubois



he's alive." Thierry Dubois, the French skipper, was spotted on the upturned hull of his boat, *Pour Amnesty International*, by a Royal Australian Air Force plane, which dropped him a liferaft. But there was no sign of Mr Bullimore, who originally got into difficulties about ten miles from M Dubois's position.

Mr Bullimore's two-masted 60ft racing yacht, *Endeavour*, is believed to be up-right, but there is no sign of a liferaft. "This could mean that the liferaft has been washed away, or that the British sailor is floating in it," said Colonel Andrew Reynolds of the Australian Defence Forces. "I remain optimistic for him, although obviously he has gone through a lot of trauma."

The priority now is to get to the two men before they are killed by exposure in the freezing conditions. Because they were sailing at the back of the race fleet, there are no other competitors near

enough to help them, and there are no commercial vessels in the area.

The families of the two men are pinning their hopes on an Australian naval frigate, *HMS Adelaide*, which set off from Perth yesterday but will not be within range with its Seahawk helicopter before tomorrow morning at the earliest.

Lisel, Mr Bullimore's Jamaican-born wife, said that not knowing if her husband had survived was agonising. "I'm obviously very upset. It is very worrying not knowing — all I can do is sit and wait by the phone."

His nephew, Stephen Mulvaney, said the past 48 hours had been "absolute hell" for all the family. "But if anyone can survive this, Tony can," he said of the former Royal Marine, who is regarded as exceptionally tough and tenacious. "We just hope that Tony has decided to stay in the boat and will be picked up when the rescue boat arrives," he said.

Conditions in the immediate area of the two yachtsmen yesterday were still very poor, with winds continuing at near-hurricane force and a very rough sea.

Roaring Forties, page 2

Adams warning
Gerry Adams said that Northern Ireland was facing dangerous times after terrorists fired a grenade at a security post outside Belfast High Court. An RUC officer was treated in hospital for minor injuries after the attack yesterday morning. **Page 2**

Woolwich bonus
More than 2.5 million members of the Woolwich will receive free shares worth an average of £1,200 if they vote to convert the building society into a bank. The shares will be priced at between £7p and 20p, putting a market value on the Woolwich of between £2.96 billion and £3.38 billion. **Page 23**

Dutch seek a Euro-truce

By CHARLES BRENNER IN BRUSSELS AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

THE Dutch Government will seek assurances from John Major today that Britain's general election campaign will not stand in the way of efforts to reshape the European Union.

Wim Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, has responded to increasing British resistance to EU changes by making a private meeting with Mr Major his first priority on the day his country formally takes over the presidency. A new treaty taking the EU into the next century is due to be signed in Amsterdam in June.

Mr Kok voiced fears yesterday that plans to change the European Union could become a "football" during the coming election campaign and he said that he would appeal to Mr Major to take a positive attitude to Europe. However, Mr Major is expected to use tonight's private dinner in The Hague to make clear that Britain will not bow to pressure to agree to a new treaty without receiving assurances over policies that it has opposed.

The Prime Minister will repeat his insistence that Europe should back down from its demands over the

introduction of a 48-hour working week before Britain co-operates with fundamental changes to the Maastricht treaty. He also plans to underline Britain's opposition to the fisheries policy, which has permitted foreign fleets to raid British stocks by "quota hopping".

British officials made plain last night there would be no softening in Britain's position from the line taken at the Dublin summit last month, when Mr Major insisted that he would not sign up to a new treaty unless he secured

Continued on page 2, col 1

Clifford announces anti-Tory vendetta

By JOANNA BAILE

MAX CLIFFORD, the publicist who orchestrated the disclosure of allegations that the Conservative MP Jerry Hayes had an illegal homosexual affair with a teenager, admitted yesterday that he was waging a "personal vendetta" against the Government.

He said he hoped to bring more sleaze allegations against the Tories before the election, adding: "In a new year and in the run up to a general election, it is important to remind the British

public of the Conservative Party's real values."

He was speaking as members of Mr Hayes's constituency association in Harlow, Essex, urged the MP to sue *The News of the World* over the allegations or resign.

Mr Clifford is a Labour supporter and a longstanding critic of the Government's health policies. He has a severely disabled daughter.

Continued on page 2, col 4

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Buzz and Elmo toy with 'R' profits

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

SELLING the wrong toy in the wrong place made it a dismal Christmas for Toys 'R' Us, the world's largest toy chain.

While British parents scoured empty shelves for Buzz Lightyear, the dynamic character from the film *Toy Story*, desperate American parents paid hundreds of dollars on the black market for a fluffy doll from *Sesame Street*, called Tickle Me Elmo. Meanwhile, Toys 'R' Us was left with a surplus of Buzz in America and a glut of Elmo in Britain.

Yesterday the company was forced to disappoint investors by announcing no increase in toy sales over the crucial

holiday season. The news caused its shares to slide on Wall Street by \$5.25 (more than £3) to \$25.50.

The company explained away the toy families as not so much a failure to get the right toys in the right place as an industry swamped by demand. "We thought the dolls would be popular but we didn't anticipate how Buzz would fly out the door in Britain," said Lou Lipschitz, chief financial officer for Toys 'R' Us. "It was a problem of manufacturers not being able to gear up fast enough to meet the demand."

The disappointing sales performance by Toys 'R' Us reflects a generally unimpressive Christmas season for most of the American retail industry. Many

companies blamed the late arrival of Thanksgiving last year which cut down the number of shopping days in the intervening days up to Christmas. Mr Lipschitz also said that there had been few very exciting new toys to encourage sales over the holiday season.

However, it seems that despite strong economic conditions in both Britain and America, consumers are still cautious about spending their money. Toy industry executives said they thought many people had been waiting for special price promotions which, in the event, were never offered. Comparing store for store sales with last year, Toys 'R' Us sales did not change in the eight weeks to the end of 1996.



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Blair accuses Tories of negative tactics in 'all end in tears' campaign

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

TONY BLAIR accused the Tories of negative advertising yesterday as they launched the first round of a multi-million-pound pre-election publicity campaign. The Labour leader said it was sad if the Tories had nothing better to do than spend millions making things up about his party.

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, unveiled five new advertisements that will be put up on

3,000 poster sites across the country over the next three weeks. Under the title "It Would All End In Tears", the emotive campaign attempts to paint a bleak picture of what the Tories believe life would be like under Labour.

The posters depict people looking unhappy and shedding red tears as they suffer without the Tories in government. The five slogans are: "New Labour, New Failure"; "New Labour, New Taxes";



Dr Mawhinney unveiling the posters yesterday

"New Labour, New Job Losses"; "New Labour, New Price Rises"; and "New Labour, New Mortgage Risk".

Mr Blair said: "I think it is really sad that the Conservatives have nothing better to do than waste £7 million or what-

ever it is on a negative advertising campaign, making things up about the Labour Party. This country wants to have some chance of hope and opportunity in the future, not just see the parties scrapping with each other in negative advertising."

Dr Mawhinney denied that the posters were negative and insisted that Labour's policies threatened the economy and the stability and prosperity of millions of families. "Tell me what is negative in reminding people that new jobs are

being created, that unemployment is falling and taxes are going down, and all that will be put at risk by a Labour Government," he said.

The Tories also published a 28-page dossier, entitled *New Labour: It Would All End In Tears*, which repeated the Tory charge that Labour has at least 89 spending commitments that ministers claim would cost £30 billion.

Professional reaction to the posters in the advertising industry was mixed. Martin Smith, managing director of

Bartle Bogle Hegarty, said the advertisement was not clear and would raise too many questions in voters' minds. They were just as likely to assume that the people looking unhappy in the advertisement were living under a Tory Government as a Labour one. He said voters would think, "Things are bad now. Why should I believe that it could be any worse under Labour?"

Mr Smith was also critical of the negative nature of the campaign. "Simply saying the

other guys stink is not a good way of advertising."

Simon Clemmow, planning director of Simons Palmer, liked the slogan "It Will All End In Tears". Like the Tony Blair "demon eyes" campaign, it captured something that people felt. "You are preying on the fears about what will happen after the election," he said. But he believed most people would not understand why the posters contained a red tear if the "It Will All End In Tears" line was not used in them.

Adams says attack on court heralds return to danger

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

GERRY ADAMS said last night that Northern Ireland faced dangerous times after terrorists fired a grenade at a security post outside Belfast High Court.

As the IRA admitted responsibility for the city centre attack, the Sinn Féin president gave a warning that the "genie is now out of the bottle".

An RUC officer was treated in hospital for minor injuries after terrorists in a car launched an improvised grenade at a security post outside the court. The officer, who dived for cover when he saw the weapon being fired, was protected by the hut's bullet-proof glass.

Mr Adams said at a press conference in Belfast a few hours after the attack: "The genie in many ways is back out of the bottle. I want to see that rectified. I think we will

still be able, when all of the main players focus their attention, to bring about a negotiated settlement. In the meantime we are living once again in dangerous times."

After the attack, just after midday yesterday, the terrorists abandoned their car in the republican Markets area, close to the court, where they had hijacked the vehicle earlier in the day. Detectives later discovered the remains of the home-made device, which is fired from a 20in launcher from the shoulder, in the burnt-out Ford Mondeo.

This type of grenade has killed scores of police officers and soldiers during the Troubles. One of the last police officers to die before the 1994 ceasefire was killed when terrorists fired one at an RUC Land Rover yards from the scene of yesterday's attack.

The IRA also claimed yesterday that it had left bombs at six locations, including four hotels, across the city. These turned out to be hoaxes.

Chief Superintendent Victor Hutchinson, the RUC's deputy sub-divisional commander in Belfast city centre, condemned the attack on the court as callous. He said: "This area is very busy and the courts were in operation at the time. Members of the public were put at risk. We are very thankful that more people were not injured."

The attack was condemned across the political spectrum. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, described the attack as an outrage and said that it reinforced Sinn Féin's exclusion from the Stormont talks. He added: "Let me make it clear that the blackmailing power of violence is not going to work. The familiar terrorist combination of hard deeds and honeyed words won't wash."

Peter Robinson, the deputy leader of the Democratic Unionists, said that the attack was an attempt to provoke loyalist terrorists. Gary McMichael, leader of the Ulster Democratic Party, the political wing of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, accused the IRA of attempting to drag Northern Ireland back into conflict.

But Mr McMichael said that the UFF was still committed to its ceasefire. He said: "I have been speaking with the Ulster Freedom Fighters and they have assured me that they remain committed to keeping the peace process alive. However, I think there is a feeling of despondency by the fact that the IRA appear to be intent upon dragging all the people of Northern Ireland back into a conflict situation."



Max Clifford, left, and Paul Stone arriving for a radio interview about their allegations against a Tory MP

Clifford tells of anti-Tory vendetta

Continued from page 1
who needs regular hospital treatment for her rheumatoid arthritis. "It is a personal vendetta based on what they have done to the NHS," he said. "The death and suffering they have caused to so many ordinary people in this country is something I have watched with growing despair and anger."

But Labour swiftly disowned Mr Clifford and attacked Conservative MPs for suggesting that it might approve of him. The Colchester North MP, Bernard Jenkin, had challenged Labour to distance itself from the "extremely disasteful" Mr Clifford and Roger Gale, chairman of the Tory backbench media committee, had said: "We knew this was going to be a dirty election, but

I don't think that is what the public were expecting from the goody, Godly Mr Blair."

But a Labour spokesman said: "The suggestion from Tory MPs that the Labour Party in any way approves of Mr Clifford's involvement in this issue shows that they are indulging in gutter politics themselves."

"We totally condemn what Mr Clifford has done and the threat that he has made today and will continue to make that clear. Throughout the 'back-to-basics' debate, the Labour party never once sought to make any political capital out of the many scandals. We have no intention of starting now."

Mr Stone said that he had given the Harlow MP an ultimatum to leave his wife, "but he said to me basically 'For the sake of my career, I can't leave my wife'."

Mr Hayes, who has been married for 17 years, has denied Mr Stone's allegations, but senior members of his constituency association said yesterday that they would find it hard to believe the denials unless he issued a writ.

Leslie Atkins, vice-president

of the association, said: "If I was him, the first thing I would do would be to take a writ out and sue. If he declines to do this, I would judge my assessment of the situation on that. I would have doubts that he was telling the truth. If we came to the conclusion that he had this affair, then we would ask him to resign."

Philip Weales, an association member and former treasurer, said: "I still hope it's not true, but if, after talking to him, we decide that it is, then he should resign. I also feel strongly that if illegal acts have taken place then he should be prosecuted." The legal age of consent for homosexuals was 21 when Mr Stone alleges the affair took place.

Mr Hayes and his family were at a secret location yesterday.

Tory MP will join rivals for talks on reform

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

A SENIOR Tory MP yesterday compromised John Major's warnings about the constitutional reform plans of the Opposition parties by announcing that he was ready to join their talks.

Hugh Dykes, MP for Harrow East, said that an all-party approach could be fully justified. In a letter to the Shadow Home Secretary, Jack Straw, he accepted an invitation to a meeting of the Liberal Democrat-Labour joint consultative committee and said he wished to concentrate on issues such as voting systems and reform of the Lords.

Mr Major, on a tour of Yorkshire, shrugged off Mr Dykes's intervention, saying that the MP had spoken as an "independent backbencher".

Labour was delighted. Mr Straw has been in talks with Mr Dykes for several months and they agreed to make public an exchange of letters. But the timing of the release, the day after Mr Major had hit out fiercely at the Opposition plans, irritated the Tory high command. In Leeds the Prime Minister said that the Opposition plans could lead to a social democratic society through "deliberate gerrymandering".

Today Mr Major will hold the first of his presidential-style press conferences at Conservative Central Office before a trip to The Netherlands and his tour of India and Pakistan. The former Tory MP Sir Frederick Bennett says in a pamphlet that the Government risks a rout under the present "outdated" electoral system. He tells Tory candidates to recall "the result of the last general election in Canada: 150 Conservative MPs before, two after, under a first-past-the-post system".

EU truce

Continued from page 1
satisfaction on the 48-hour working week on "quota-hopping".

"Our priority is to campaign for Britain's interests within Europe and we will continue to do that," a senior aide said. The two leaders are anxious that relations between the two countries may become increasingly strained during a general election campaign that coincides with a presidency held by one of the most integrationist EU nations.

Dutch leaders yesterday made clear their nervousness over Britain's stance in the coming months, during which they hope to secure agreement on wide-ranging changes to bring about a more flexible union. The Dutch indicated the biggest headache in a presidency that faces the task of producing a new treaty within weeks of the likely British election date.

The EU wants the treaty finished in order to clear the decks for monetary union in two years' time and to allow the start of negotiations with future members from central Europe. Mr Kok emphasised that he was not attempting to interfere in the British general election, mindful of the controversy caused last week when Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, called on Britain to make its European position clear during the election campaign.

The Dutch presidency will be launched today at a formal meeting with Jacques Santer and the full EU Commission.

Ashdown seeks food-safety monitor as CJD toll hits 15

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

PADDY ASHDOWN called last night for the creation of an independent body to monitor food safety and dispel a "climate of fear" among consumers after the beef crisis.

The call by the Liberal Democrat leader came as the Department of Health confirmed that a total of 15 people were so far believed to have fallen victim to a strain of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease linked to eating BSE-infected beef. The latest is thought to have been Victoria Lowther, 19, a hotelier's daughter from Carlisle, who died in November.

Mr Ashdown accused the Government of relying too much for scientific guidance on advisers with commercial links, and of failing to take prompt precautionary action against risks to health and the environment. Speaking at a dinner at the annual Oxford Farming Conference, Mr Ashdown said: "What we need is a stand-alone, independent commission which, like the Audit Commission, reports to Parliament, not ministers, and is strong enough to fight its corner in the marketplace. The respon-

sibility for food safety, upon which the farmer and consumer depend, cannot any longer be left to the multinational food processors and the chemical giants and supermarkets."

Citing the recent arrival on supermarket shelves of products containing genetically engineered soya, but with no mention of that on their labels, Mr Ashdown said consumers, like farmers, were being left powerless and bewildered.

Mr Ashdown said the lesson of "mad cow" disease,



Victoria Lowther: suspected victim

which was second only to the poll tax as the "worst and most expensive administrative fiasco" in the 17 years of Tory rule, was that farmers had to team up with consumers to win back control of their markets from "the multinationals, the mega-marketers and the politicians" by demanding more information and tougher safety standards.

Labour has said it will set up an independent food body if it wins power.

The Department of Health would not confirm yesterday that the fifteenth CJD case was Miss Lowther, although reports last month suggested her death was caused by the strain, which affects the young. A department spokeswoman said: "We never discuss individual cases."

The latest monthly figures show the number of referrals to the national CJD surveillance centre in Edinburgh in 1996 was 111 to the end of November, the highest since 1990. On past experience, about half will turn out to be genuine CJD cases, mostly of the "sporadic" form, which mainly hits older people and is not linked with beef.

Churches defiant over jobs report

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CHURCH leaders are defying pressure to delay publication of a report that gives warning of the social dangers caused by job insecurity and "humiliatingly low pay". They say politicians have failed to take the issue seriously.

The churches plan to publish *Unemployment and the Future of Work* in April, which is likely to coincide with the general election campaign. If the election is brought forward to March, senior Church figures suggest that the report's publication could be brought forward for greatest impact.

The ecumenical report, the result of an 18-month inquiry, will give warning of risks caused by low pay, lack of job security and high unemployment levels. The authors, members of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, criticise the "casualisation" of labour, under which employers have increasingly offered short-term contracts.

The report's timing will add to the growing feeling among ministers that Church leaders are taking an increasingly political stance in the run-up to the general election. Ann

Widdicombe, the Home Office Minister, last week complained that the Church of England was showing political bias in criticising the Government over moral issues.

The Right Rev David Sheppard, Bishop of Liverpool, who is leading the unemployment inquiry, set the tone for the report last week by writing: "Top of our nation's agenda ought to be providing proper jobs... We have become fatalistic, assuming that nothing can be done about mass unemployment and humiliatingly low pay."

Although the Church leaders deny that the report is intended to criticise any particular party, it is expected to counter Tory claims over reduced unemployment levels by questioning the quality of work that jobless people are able to obtain.

A decision on the publication date is to be made next month but a Church of England figure said: "There is clearly going to be more interest in this subject before the election than afterwards, and there is no point in wasting this work."

Labour consults on plan for preventing strikes

Labour Party leaders are to consult employers' bodies, companies and trade unions on measures aimed at preventing and resolving industrial disputes. The move, which comes after informal meetings with a range of business and union leaders, will centre on early conciliation and arbitration, proposals that have found particular favour, especially with employers.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, is already consulting on his proposals to prevent strikes by providing for the courts to decide on a new test of whether strikes are disproportionate in terms of their impact on business and the public.

Banker fined over heroin

A member of the Rothschild banking dynasty yesterday admitted possession of heroin after Customs officers searched his luggage as he prepared to fly home to Switzerland on Sunday. Benjamin de Rothschild, a millionaire banker, was fined £400 with £50 costs by magistrates in Southampton. The court was told that 8.9 grams of the drug had been found. De Rothschild, 33, is a registered heroin addict.

Priest pocketed charity cash

A clergyman who plundered more than £50,000 from church funds, including £40,000 donated by Comic Relief, was jailed for 12 months. The Rev Martyn Davis, 37, stole the money to settle credit-card debts while he was working as a youth officer in the Peterborough diocese. He applied for charity grants for projects but kept the money.

60-mile hunt for hospital bed

A critically ill woman was driven 60 miles by ambulance after two hospitals were unable to find her a bed. Edna Harrison, 54, finally arrived at Hull Royal Infirmary to take up the only available intensive care bed in Yorkshire four hours after she had a heart attack at her home in Leeds. Her condition last night was described as poorly but stable.

Jail siege ends peacefully

A siege at Glenochil prison, Clackmannan, ended peacefully 19 hours after it began when a nurse and a prison officer were released after being taken hostage by three prisoners who reportedly made no demands. In Dublin, six prisoners holding four officers at Mountjoy jail for three days were given supplies of a heroin substitute to calm the situation.

After the freeze, the flood

Flooding caused many schools and large buildings to remain closed after the holiday yesterday. In Devon and Cornwall 60 schools were closed because of frozen or burst pipes. Cambridge Water has been repairing four times the usual number of burst mains. At least 16 people are known to have died as a result of the cold spell. Forecast, page 22

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By EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THE Southern Ocean, where Tony Bullimore and Thierry Dubois are fighting for their lives, is one of the most inhospitable places on Earth. In the Roaring Forties and Furious Fifties, the latitudes that border Antarctica, the winds nearly always blow at gale force and hurricane conditions are not uncommon.

Yachtsmen also have to contend with bitter cold, even in the summer months. Paul Standbridge, an interna-

tional racing yachtsman who has sailed the Southern Ocean five times in Whitbread races, believes the cold will be the biggest danger for the two yachtsmen as they wait for an Australian navy frigate to reach them. "People have survived 110 days in the Pacific, but where they are, the cold will kill them. They won't have time to die of hunger."

For yachtsmen, especially singlehanded like Mr Bullimore and M Dubois, the demands of the Southern Ocean are immense. The winds circling the globe, unhindered by

intervening land masses, create huge wave formations which also circle without obstruction, except at the notorious Cape Horn where they are squeezed through the narrow gap between the tip of South America and the Antarctic.

Sailing west-to-east, as they were doing, can be exhilarating as boats surf down huge waves with the wind generally behind them. But the risks are high if a boat gets out of control, especially when skippers are asleep and relying on their autopilots. It is not yet known what problems beset Mr

Bullimore's 60ft *Exide Challenger* and M Dubois's *Amnesty International*. One explanation is that the boats were rolled by a "rogue wave", a massive wall of water breaking dangerously as it passed underneath the yachts. Mr Standbridge said: "All waves are rogues in those latitudes."

Another possibility is that one of the yachts may have made an involuntary tack, which could result in water ballast, weighing up to five tonnes, moving to the wrong side of the boat which could cause it to be swamped in a rough sea.

Curzon heir to stay in cell until wife is paid

By ADRIAN LEE

THE HEIR to Viscount Scarsdale remained behind bars last night despite agreeing to pay his former wife several hundred thousand pounds.

A judge ordered that Peter Curzon, 47, should remain in custody until the divorce settlement was received by Karen Curzon from the United States, where he now lives.

Mr Curzon was arrested on Friday at a restaurant in Hastings, East Sussex, where he was lunching with his 13-year-old daughter, Danielle, over his failure to pay a £175,000 settlement. At the High Court Family Division yesterday Mrs Curzon, who tipped off the authorities that her husband was back in the country, accepted an undisclosed lump sum.

Although not the full amount, she said afterwards that she was content and would use the money to pay off her overdraft, but she would not begin celebrating until she had the money in her hands.

After her former husband was led away, Mrs Curzon said: "I have been very stressed. I am content with the outcome but, given his past history, I will not be celebrating until I see the money."

In the meantime Mr Curzon, who has since remarried, will be held at Charing Cross police station in London, and will be brought before the court again on Friday if the settlement has not been paid.

Neither party gave evidence yesterday and Mrs Curzon



Peter Curzon yesterday, and his former wife, Karen

avoided her husband's sideways glances in the court room. They divorced early last year after 14 years of marriage. The original settlement provided £400,000 for her and £175,000 for their daughter's schooling and cost of her dressage horses. Mother and daughter live at the former family home near Battle in East Sussex.

Christopher Smith, for Mr Curzon, said the money had been telegraphically transferred from his client's account. The transaction could take up to 13 days to complete but he hoped it would reach Mrs Curzon's solicitors in the next few days.

Mr Justice Wilson made the order that Mr Curzon should be held until the money arrived. He also said on Saturday, when he decided that Mr Curzon's "track record" of non-cooperation with the

court meant that he should not retain his freedom. Had he refused to pay yesterday, Mr Curzon, whose family seat is Kedleston Hall, in Derbyshire, faced a six-week jail term.

He and his first wife, aged 39, met when both worked at a car auctioneer in Nottinghamshire. She came from a working-class background and they married in secret. He gave up the second-hand car business after receiving a private income when Kedleston Hall was transferred to the National Trust. Shortly after their marriage, he quarrelled with his father over the future of the family seat and the two have not spoken since.

Mrs Curzon is also no longer on speaking terms with her former husband. "I would just like to be able to get on with the rest of my life now," she said. "I feel sorry that he

did not deal with this situation much earlier and all this would have been unnecessary. I regret it has come to this."

She gave more details about events leading to her former husband's arrest at the restaurant in Hastings. On learning that he was in the country and wanted to see his daughter, Mrs Curzon applied for a High Court writ over his failure to comply with the previous judgment at Hastings County Court. It was granted under the rarely used law of *Ne exeat regno* ("Shall not leave the realm"), to prevent him fleeing abroad.

Mrs Curzon provided a photograph and he was seized while having lunch with his daughter, Danielle. Danielle knew nothing of the carefully planned operation, which involved choosing a restaurant with large windows so the officials could watch him.

Mrs Curzon said: "I believe when he was arrested Danielle gave him a lecture that if he broke the law then he could expect to be arrested." Her daughter, a promising rider, still had strong feelings for her father, Mrs Curzon said, and had found the case confusing. Asked if she now ever regretted becoming involved with Mr Curzon, she said: "I have got Danielle, so something good came out of it."

Mr Curzon's most renowned forbear was George Curzon, the celebrated Viceroy of India, of whom it was said: "My name is George Nathaniel Curzon. I am a most superior person."



Lord Scarsdale at the family home, Kedleston Hall, in Derbyshire: "He won't get any more money from me"

Viscount condemns 'snake-like' son

By ADRIAN LEE

VISCOUNT Scarsdale made a withering attack on his "snake-like" son yesterday, describing him as a disgrace to the family name and saying it was sad that he would one day inherit the title.

"He is not a decent-minded person," said Lord Scarsdale. "His behaviour is disgusting. I have bent over backwards to help and he has kicked me in the teeth all the way. He will inherit my title — one can't do anything about that — but he won't get any more money from me."

Lord Scarsdale, 72, the 3rd Viscount, 7th Baron and 11th Baronet, can trace his ancestry to 1066, when Robert de Courson came over with William the Conqueror. He last spoke to his son 12 years

ago when, he says, Mr Curzon wanted to sell the family seat of Kedleston Hall, built in 1759, so that he could pocket 10 per cent of the proceeds.

"He is not interested in beautiful Kedleston, not in the slightest," said Lord Scarsdale, who eventually sold to the National Trust and now lives in one 23-room wing. His son received more than £1 million as settlement and Lord Scarsdale yesterday scoffed at claims that his son had no money. "I know for a fact that he has received several millions from family sources over the past 12 years. He inherited a house from an aunt on the Hyde Park estate. I would say the cash and assets were worth £4 million."

Asked to describe his son's character, Lord Scarsdale — family motto "Let

Curzon holde what Curzon helde" — said: "He is snake-like in the sense that one never knows what he is up to next. He is underhand and double-dealing. One always hopes that members of one's family — particularly one like ours — know how to behave decently."

Lord Scarsdale said he had never met his son's former wife, Karen, but she appeared to be doing what was right. He had not even known about the wedding until after the event. At the time, Mr Curzon was working in the estate office. "One morning he came in late. I asked where the hell he had been and he was saying he had frightful toothache and had been to the dentist. I later discovered that he had gone off that morning and got married. Is that normal behaviour?"

Children tried to save mother after stabbing

By RUSSELL JENKINS

TWO children tried valiantly to save their mother's life after she was stabbed repeatedly by a killer at their home. As the attacker fled, Nicole Corless, 10, and her brother Christopher, 8, dialled 999 and followed instructions given by an ambulance operator to try to staunch the bleeding.

When paramedics arrived they found the children weeping over their mother's body, her wounds swathed in thick towels just as they had been instructed. However the injuries were too severe. Tracy Corless, 32, died in hospital.

Last night police and ambulance staff praised the children for their presence of mind. The killer had called at their rented, terraced house in Bacup, Lancashire. As soon as Mrs Corless opened the front door he rained blows on her, stabbing her several times in the neck and chest. He then escaped by car.

Detective Chief Superintendent Bill Hacking, head of Lancashire CID, said that Mrs Corless, who was separated from her husband, would have had little chance to defend herself in Sunday's murder. "This was a particularly frenzied attack. The children saw their mother being brutally stabbed. They are very shocked and traumatised but I can only praise them for doing everything they should have done. They showed remarkable

presence of mind for ones so young."

"Alison Wilkinson, 31, the ambulance controller, said: "When the girl came on the line she was clearly distressed. I told her to try to keep calm while I arranged for an ambulance to go to the scene. I told her to get some clean towels on a cloth."

"I could hear her brother shouting and crying in the background and I asked to speak to him while she went for the towels. There was a lot of noise and she put the phone down. I rang back but the line was engaged. I kept trying and I got through. She said that she had done what I asked with the towels and that the police had arrived. I told her she was being a big girl for her mum and her brother. She was very brave."

Upstairs, the children's three-year-old sister, Francesca, slept through the attack. Yesterday they were all being looked after by Harry Pickles, 62, Mrs Corless's father, and his wife Mary, in Bacup. Mr Pickles said: "We are very, very upset but we are sticking together as a family. The children come first now and that's our first and foremost thought. We must see to them."

A man was arrested yesterday afternoon in Torquay, Devon, and detectives were planning to travel from Lancashire to interview him.

Emaciated horses seized at Gucci stud

By LIN JENKINS

ARAB horses at the stud of the late Paolo Gucci, grandson of the founder of the fashion empire, had been neglected to the point where one had to be destroyed, the RSPCA said yesterday.

Inspectors have seized 11 other horses. Two were so weak that they had to be carried into a horse trailer to be taken from the stud farm in Ruspur, West Sussex, to an animal welfare centre.

Ownership of the horses, the stud and adjoining mansion, Normans, has been the subject of a legal dispute between Mr Gucci's widow, Jenny, who is the mother of his daughter Gemma, 13, and his girlfriend Penny Armstrong, the former stud groom who is mother to his two youngest children.

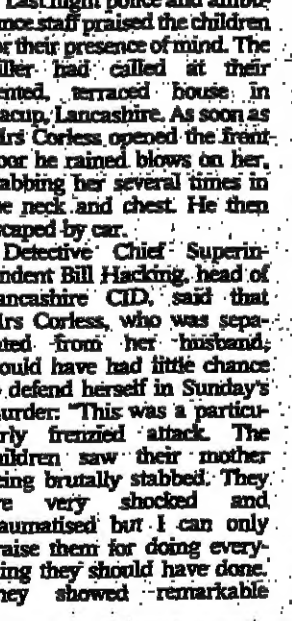
Miss Armstrong, 27, is living in Normans with her young children and other members of her family and is believed to be in charge of the adjoining stud, Millfield.

Carroll Lampert, the inspector who led the raid, said he was appalled at the state of the horses and the conditions of squalor they were forced to endure. Some had only their droppings as bedding.

An unbroken two-year-old had to be put down. It had suffered malnutrition and worm infestation. The others were in an emaciated state. At least one is thought unlikely to recover. The RSPCA was called to the stud last Thursday after local people found a collapsed horse in a field.

A young Arab horse can be worth from £800 to several thousand pounds. The RSPCA is paying £200 a day to feed the remaining 30-odd horses at the stud. However, it is negotiating with the executors of Mr Gucci's will and the receivers appointed when he filed for bankruptcy in 1993 to meet the cost.

Miss Armstrong was said not to be available at the £25 million estate yesterday. Her father, Stephen, said: "We have been told by our lawyers that, for legal reasons, we cannot say anything."



Tracy Corless with Nicole and Christopher

Show goes on for Ayckbourn

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

SIR Alan Ayckbourn's love affair with Scarborough, which had shown signs of foundering in a dispute about funding for his theatre, was back on course last night. Councilors agreed to provide an extra £50,000 a year to help the Stephen Joseph Theatre, which has financial troubles just nine months after opening.

The argument was dubbed "invites versus lavies" after it was claimed that, if the cash went to the theatre, the town's

public conveniences would have to close. But there was reassurance for residents after the council voted 35-9 in favour of funding the theatre.

David Thompson, chairman of the leisure and amenities committee, said: "The money for the theatre will come out of the leisure budget, which has nothing to do with the lavatories. All this will mean is the reallocation of money throughout the leisure and amenities budget."

He added: "I am delighted

with the decision. It is crucial that we support culture and the arts at seaside resorts and Scarborough has a tradition of doing so, not just for visitors but for the residents."

Sir Alan said last week: "The theatre is a kiss of life for the town and we generate ten times more in revenue for the town than we asked for."

The theatre is named after his stage mentor. Ayckbourn plays are traditionally staged first in Scarborough before transferring to the West End.

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Sheraton Antalya	US\$ 155
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Sheraton Beijing	US\$ 155
Sheraton Berlin	US\$ 155
Sheraton Bologna	US\$ 155
Sheraton Bucharest	US\$ 155
Sheraton Budapest	US\$ 155
Sheraton Cairo	US\$ 155
Sheraton Cardiff	US\$ 155
Sheraton Copenhagen	US\$ 155
Sheraton Dublin	US\$ 155
Sheraton Edinburgh	US\$ 155
Sheraton Frankfurt	US\$ 155
Sheraton Geneva	US\$ 155
Sheraton Glasgow	US\$ 155
Sheraton Hamburg	US\$ 155
Sheraton Hong Kong	US\$ 155
Sheraton Istanbul	US\$ 155
Sheraton Jakarta	US\$ 155
Sheraton London	US\$ 155
Sheraton Luxembourg	US\$ 155
Sheraton Madrid	US\$ 155
Sheraton Manila	US\$ 155
Sheraton Miami	US\$ 155
Sheraton Moscow	US\$ 155
Sheraton New York	US\$ 155
Sheraton Osaka	US\$ 155
Sheraton Paris	US\$ 155
Sheraton Rome	US\$ 155
Sheraton Seoul	US\$ 155
Sheraton Singapore	US\$ 155
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3. ONLAE (Spain)	£1.6 billion
4. La Française des Jeux (France)	£1.0 billion

*Source: La Fleur's Lottery World, The Worldwide Lottery Efficiency Study 1996, based on the top 30 lotteries worldwide ranked by govt. profit.

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there's a terminal within reach of nearly every adult in the country. And our constant attention to software development is designed to make sure those terminals operate to the highest levels of reliability. Indeed, we are currently raising on average £34.5 million a week. So it isn't just this week's National Lottery winners who are on top of the world.



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هكذا من الأصل

Hot air and fervent prayer fuel renewed attempt to float around the world in 18 days

Branson's balloon hopes fly high as weather clears

FROM ANDREW PIERCE IN MARRAKESH

PRAYERS were said in Morocco's mosques last night seeking spiritual guidance for Richard Branson on the eve of his pioneering attempt to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon. He was due finally to take off this morning if the skies above Marrakesh remain clear.

Bad weather, which has repeatedly delayed the expedition, cleared yesterday. Local weathermen gave approval for a launch from 8am onwards, provided that ground wind speeds remained below 5 knots. The launch site is in the same time zone as Britain.

Mr Branson is in a three-way race to become the first to complete the 16,000-mile voyage non-stop in 18 days. American and Belgian crews plan to be in the air at the same time.

Only hours before take-off, final fitness tests were being carried out on Rory McCarthy, 36, who was chosen from 1,000 applicants to be the third crew member on Virgin Global Challenger. Mr McCarthy, a businessman who holds the record for sky diving at altitude, is suffering from bronchitis and has developed fluid on the lung.

Mr Branson, 46, who arrived in Marrakesh on Sunday night, said: "We are worried about Rory. He is not well. But the underbirds will not delay the launch for him. We have only one window of opportunity. But it is Rory's decision. We are not worried about any risks of infection. There are far greater risks to worry about."

Mr Branson's mission has caused him to rewrite his will for the seventh time. The hundred-page document, which he has taken to Morocco, contains details of the 200 companies in the billion-pound Virgin empire in the event of his death in the Challenger. The launch will be witnessed by his wife, Joan, and their children, Holly and Sam.

A "key man" insurance policy has been taken out on Mr Branson for the flight by his group's parent company. The premium costs £150,000 and would provide an estimated £30 million payout.

Confidence is so high in the Virgin camp that Mr Branson tried yesterday to place a £500,000 bet at 2-1 on winning the race, which will be fought out at an average altitude of 30,000 feet. Mr Branson announced that he would have donated his winnings to charity but Ladbrokes rejected his wager.

Mr Branson said at the launch site, an RAF base at Marrakesh: "We are at the mercy of the wind. The Global Challenger is very much an experimental craft. I know there are dangers. But the lure of completing the world's last great aviation challenge was too hard to resist."

The Challenger weighs 11.5 tons when loaded, its height of 200ft at take-off makes it taller than Nelson's Column, and it will fly at up to 250mph. The balloon was designed by Per Lindstrand, 46, who is the second co-pilot.

The three men will take turns to sleep in eight-hour cycles in the solitary bed in the two-storey capsule. Food packs have been prepared which avoid high-fibre products. Champagne and caviar have been included in Mr Branson's hamper.

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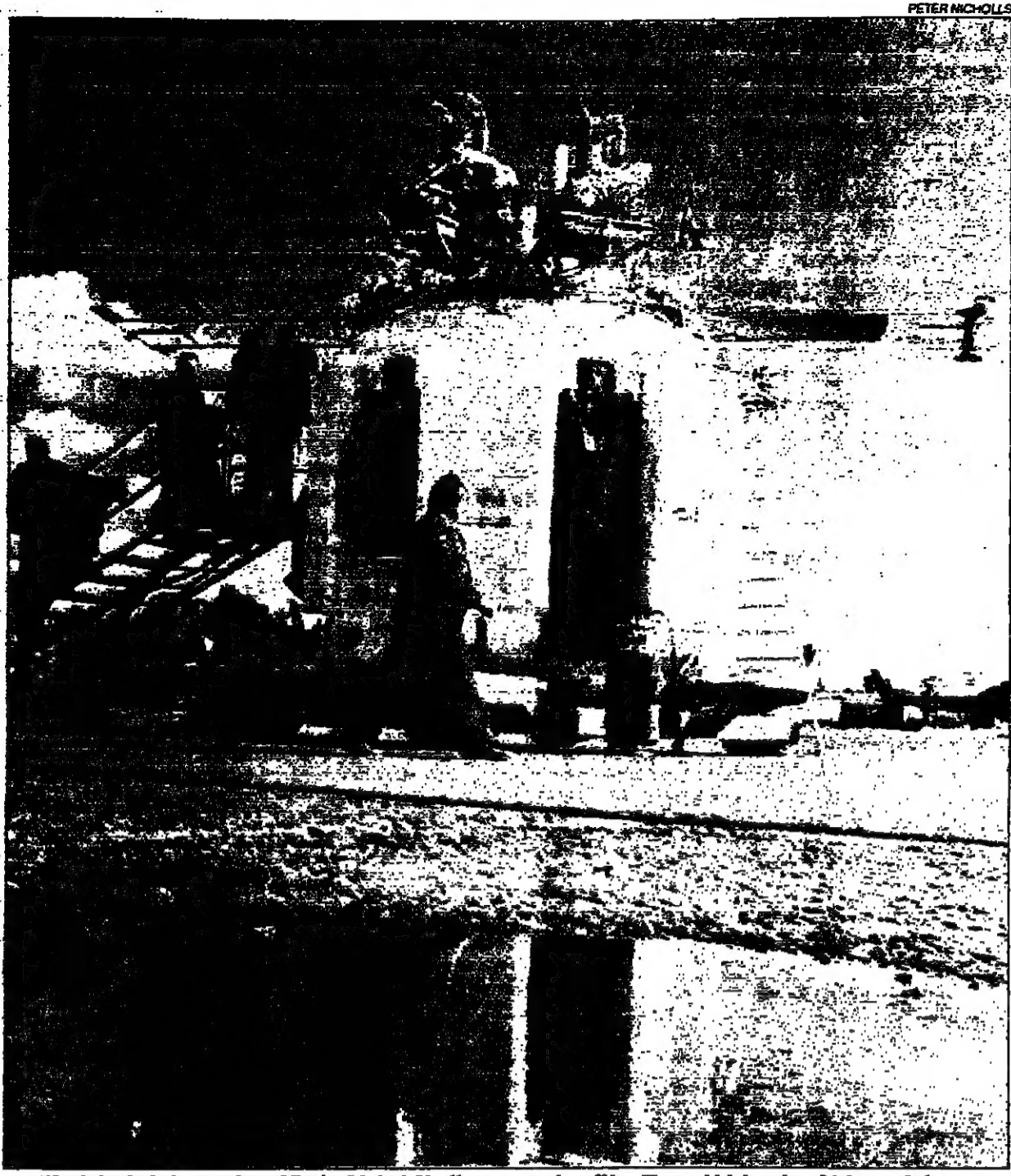
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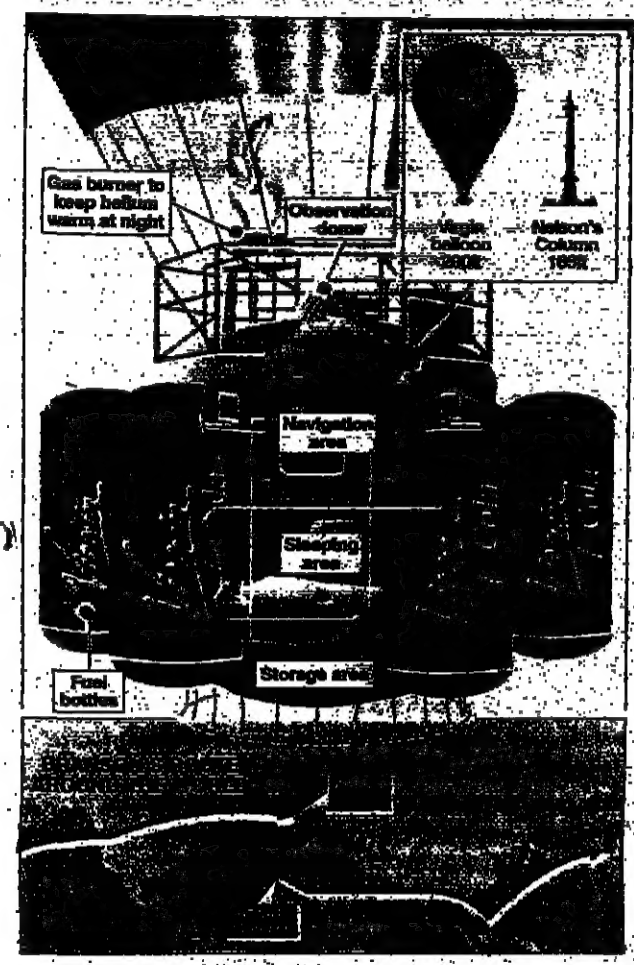
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Final checks being made on Virgin Global Challenger: at take-off it will stand higher than Nelson's Column



Gas burner to keep balloon aloft at night. Observation dome. Navigation system. Capsule. Storage area.



McCarthy: bronchitis

LAUNCH COUNTDOWN

Monday January 6
5pm: Envelope unfurled at launch site.
8pm: 1.1 million cubic feet of helium gas pumped into balloon.

Tuesday January 7
6am: Helium pumping operation complete.
6.30am: Attach capsule to ground launch pad with explosive bolts.
7am: Attach six propane gas tanks to capsule to provide lighting, electricity and pressurisation system for capsule.
7.30am: Three pilot/venter capsule to begin final systems tests.
8.30am: Planned launch time.

Once helium is pumped into balloon the Virgin Global Challenger has only 72 hours in which it can be launched.



Branson: worried

Christian TV station runs out of cash for 'stoic' staff

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S first mainstream Christian cable television station is facing collapse before it even reaches the screen after failing to raise sufficient cash from donors and investors.

ARK2, which had promised that it would "feed the human spirit" with quality Christian soaps, chat shows and moral debate, confirmed yesterday that all 32 staff at its headquarters in Bristol had been given notice. They were told that the company could not afford to pay their wages for December.

Alan Rogers, a director, said that the company had run up debts and been forced to put its operations on hold. He added: "The staff are being very stoic about it."

The company, which was created in 1995, raised about £1.8 million from churches, trusts, individuals and Christian businessmen and was scheduled to go on air last October. The launch was postponed several times.

One of the company's creditors, who asked not to be named, said: "We have done quite a lot of work for them and they owe us quite a lot of money."

"In this climate of high moral debate, it is ironic that no money could be found to pay for a television station offering to air that debate."

Mr Rogers said he was confident that the company would be able to re-employ its staff and begin running again. The current difficulties had arisen because payment for its first production contract, with a South African station, had been delayed by foreign-exchange controls.

He said: "That payment is worth £300,000. When it comes through, my hope is that we will be back in business."

Mr Rogers blamed internal restructuring and reorganisation of leading cable companies for their failure to agree deals with ARK2 but he forecast successful talks before the autumn, when cable television would offer up to 200 channels. He said ARK2 was also actively pursuing contracts in Europe.

Cafe plan in Mall arch

By MARCUS BINNETT

A RESTAURANT with one of the finest views in London could soon be installed in Admiralty Arch. Roger Freeman, the Public Service Minister, said yesterday that he was extending the search for a new role for the building to include public uses of many kinds.

The issue before ministers is whether the empty arch should be used mainly as public or private sector offices, or be made accessible to the public, including the thousands of tourists who throng Trafalgar Square on one side and The Mall on the other.

The Times has proposed that the space over the arch should become a brasserie-style cafe, restaurant and Mr Freeman said yesterday: "This is certainly a possibility we are considering."

Prince slopes home to TV sport he can happily shun

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Prince of Wales will return from his skiing holiday in Klosters tonight just in time to switch on ITV's much-trumpeted live debate on the future of the monarchy, in which actors from *EastEnders* will trade constitutional niceties with a former Rolling Stone. The heir to the throne, however, is likely to find better things to do.

He may have seen that a MORI opinion poll conducted for the programme gives him the thumbs-down. But he may also note the absence of any serious constitutional experts or supporters of monarchy from the panel: Lord Blake, Vernon Bogdanor and Lord St John of Fawley have given way to the motor racing commentator Murray Walker, the publicist Max Clifford and the javelin thrower Tessa Sanderson.

The debate is at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, also the venue for the Saturday evening entertainment provided by *Gladiators*. It has generated curious publicity, possibly explained by its screening in the dog-end days of the early new year, when nothing much real happens. Yesterday the *Daily Mirror*, freshly revamped as *The Mirror*, quoted at length an unnamed source on how sorry the Prince was that he had let down the Queen, the Princess of Wales, his children and Camilla Parker Bowles over his divorce.

The Prince, the newspaper said, was ready to make a fresh start and pursue a more positive life in future. Mention of the word "relaunch" to his senior aides yesterday caused them to cringe and to wail. "He is not relaunching himself: he is carrying on just as before," one of his staff said.

There is, nevertheless, a subtle shift in the way the Prince is being sold to his public. He had a good week on the Swiss ski slopes with Prince Harry, and enjoyed an unusually mannerly and civilised relationship with the attendant press corps, which left him alone in return for one photo-opportunity each morning.

"The explanation is simple," one seasoned royal reporter said. "He's not as interesting as he used to be, especially when he hasn't got Prince William with him."

The Prince's relations with the press remain strained. During a recent nine-day tour of Central Asian republics, he did not exchange a single word with the six reporters who accompanied him.

But there is more to it than that. A new regime is in place at St James's Palace. Now the Prince's public life is directed by Stephen Lempert, his new private secretary and an old Foreign Office hand, and Mark Bolland, a new assistant private secretary who understands the wily ways of the media from his previous job as secretary of the Press Complaints Commission.

Staff hope that, with the divorce well out of the way, the media will concentrate on the positive aspects of the Prince's working life. One of his senior aides said yesterday: "The Prince's standing in public esteem has declined in the last five years, but if he gets it right in the next five he will recover his popularity."



Novel formula: Murray Walker and the Prince

Derek Humphry's book, *Final Edit: The Practicalities of Self-Deliverance and Assisted Suicide for the Dying* (article, January 3), has never been banned in the United Kingdom, and has been freely available through book trade channels since 1991.

□ A report (December 30) referred to unsubstantiated rumours that Imran Khan and his political party in Pakistan, the Movement for Justice, had received substantial campaign funds from his father-in-law, Sir James Goldsmith. Mr Khan has asked us to make clear that he has not received any such financial support.

The essential guide to gannin' doon toon

By ROBIN YOUNG

PARTY city, according to the British Tourist Authority, is Newcastle upon Tyne. To celebrate the fact, it has published a Geordie phrase book to help visiting foreign tourists.

The book, part of *UK The Guide*, a magazine aimed at the international youth market, starts by explaining that on Tyneside "aye" means "yes" and "why-aye" means "definitely yes". With phonetics that could prove more of a hindrance than a help to tourists, there

then follow explanations for "ho'way man" (rendered as "watch what you are doing"), "wor lass" ("my lady friend") and "wor lad" ("my beau"). "Toon" means Newcastle, and "Toon army" refers to the followers of Newcastle United.

Advance students are taught to distinguish between "bugger off man" (translated as "please go away") and "why-ye bugger man" (which foreigners are asked to accept as the local alternative for "good gracious me").

Finally, the phrase book suggests readers might like to use the guide to

construct sentences of their own. "For example, if contemplating an evening out with friends," *UK The Guide* suggests helpfully, "you could say: 'Why-ye bugger man! I'm gannin' doon toon to get mortal drunk and find some tottie.'"

This is said to be the equivalent of "Good gracious me. I am going into Newcastle to get one too many drinks and find some desirable young lady."

UK The Guide is published in five languages and circulated through all the BTA's offices abroad. It is not available in Britain.

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INVESTMENTS

ENO seeks cash for new home, five years after Coliseum handout

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE English National Opera is planning to move out of the London Coliseum and into a new theatre that it hopes to build at a cost of up to £120 million. Eight sites in north, south and west London are being considered.

The company will seek 75 per cent of the costs from the National Lottery, just five years after the Government awarded it £10.5 million to buy the Coliseum's freehold. Yesterday the Tory MP

David Mellor condemned the decision as an "outrageous breach of faith". As Chief Secretary to the Treasury, he responded to the company's pleas for a special grant on the understanding that it would finance the refurbishment.

Dennis Marks, the company's general director, vigorously defended himself against the suggestion that another London opera house was seeking lottery money just after the Royal Opera House received a £78 million grant. He said that more than a tenth of the English National Opera's regular

audience came from beyond the South East and that the company hoped eventually to tour. He also rejected the argument that it was less likely to attract audiences to some "god-forsaken" place than to central London.

The decision to move was made after a year-long feasibility study: a new building was seen as the only way to secure the company's future, saving an estimated £1 million in annual running costs. To stay at the Coliseum would mean modernising technical facilities and improving accessibility, among

other work. The cost would be £50 million, plus "at least" £20 million for relocating the company during the two-year renovation.

The proposed new theatre would have perhaps two auditoriums, one of 2,100 seats for large-scale opera and dance, and a smaller, flexible 900-seater for more intimate productions.

Mr Mellor, whose disillusionment with the company led him to resign from its board two years ago, said: "It is an outrageous breach of faith for the ENO to abandon the Coliseum only five

years after going down on bended knee to the Government to ask to be given the freehold. This was done on the understanding that they would find the money for the refurbishment themselves. There has never been any sign that they were able to do so, so it's pie in the sky to think they could raise the millions for a new theatre."

He added: "ENO has many fundamental artistic problems to confront, not least whether there is a future in an increasingly sophisticated society for opera in Eng-

lish. Artistically, the house is not going through a good period. To try to get the lottery to pay for a new opera house is pure escapism, when they should be tackling these other fundamental problems."

"The Coliseum is a terrific theatre, wonderfully placed in the heart of London with great acoustics and splendid sight-lines. If they can't fill the Coliseum — and they can't — how on earth could they fill some new white elephant stuck out in King's Cross?"

John Allison, assistant editor of *Opera* magazine, also expressed

concern about the plans, particularly in the light of the controversies over the Royal Opera House and the Cardiff opera house, whose lottery application was rejected. "There are lessons to be learned from the Cardiff experience. The fact that Cardiff didn't succeed suggests bad feelings towards an opera house, from tabloid opinion to government. If Cardiff succeeds this time, they will probably do so without the dread word 'opera' in their title."

Richard Morrison, page 3

Greatest hits albums head Crossover Top 50

Classical 'easy listening' gets a chart of its own

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

MUSIC that is neither pure pop nor truly classical was recognised as a genre in its own right yesterday with the publication of the first Top 50 chart of "crossover" albums.

Compilations of favourite classical tunes, film soundtracks and the Three Tenors — José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti — in concert feature in the new listing, which aims to establish harmony in the music world after discord over the old classical chart. Compiled by Chart Information Network, it includes non-traditional interpretations of classical works, classical-style soundtracks and compilations of extracts of classical works.

Six of the top ten are compilations by various artists. At No 1 is an album of arias called *The Best Opera Album in the World... Ever!* — the latest in a series covering musical genres from punk to love ballads.

The crossover chart will cater for classical performers who want to go for the middle-brow and popular per-



Faithfull and Garrett: albums kept off classical chart

formers seeking a more sophisticated market. It also allows customers of traditional classical recordings to study a specialist chart uncluttered by the compilations that currently swamp the market.

"Until five years ago it was very easy to know what went into the classical chart. But with the advent of Classic FM there has been a lot of concentration on the more accessible end of the classical market and the traditional classical

market has stagnated," Catherine Pusey, CIN's charts director, said. "The chart was not helping to introduce anyone to traditional classical recordings."

The new chart was conceived after certain work by performers such as the soprano Lesley Garrett, the rock chanteuse Marianne Faithfull and the guitarist John Williams was excluded from the classical chart. Garrett, of the English Na-

tional Opera, who tours large venues with repertoire including lighter music, found that her album *Soprano in Hollywood* languished at No 57 in the pop chart after it was ruled ineligible for the classical chart, which it would have topped. "It was not being judged against its peers," she said. "Instead I was being compared to Blur and Oasis, which made no sense at all."

The album has entered the crossover chart at No 11. Faithfull complained when her album of Kurt Weill songs, *20th Century Blues*, was kept off the classical chart and Williams was annoyed when his recording *John Williams Plays The Movies*, mainly comprising film themes but containing an album of classical music, was excluded. Williams is at No 12 in the crossover chart. Faithfull does not feature.

However, the trend towards extracts and compilations looks set to continue to divide the classical music world. Curtis Price, principal of the Royal Academy of Music, welcomes versatility among recording artists but fears that a crossover chart will only encourage the compilation genre to blossom further. "I think compilation albums are a bad thing. Such an album is like a meal that is nothing but desserts. The real world of music is not like that," he said.

Changing his analogy, he added: "These compilation albums are like a drug. If you think opera comprises just the high points you will continue to go for even higher highs and become addicted to the lollipops of opera."

Leading article, page 17

CROSSOVER CHART TOP 10

- 1 Best Opera Album in the World...Ever! Various
- 2 The Greatest Classical Movie Album Various
- 3 The No.1 Classical Album Various
- 4 Songs of Sanctuary Adiemus
- 5 100 Popular Classics Various
- 6 Something Wonderful Bryn Terfel
- 7 Braveheart LSO/Homer
- 8 Best Classical Album in the World...Ever! Various
- 9 A Lasting Inspiration Jacqueline du Pré
- 10 Classic Hits Various



The top-selling CD is a compilation of arias

Bainbridge wins second Whitbread novel award

By ERICA WAGNER
LITERARY EDITOR

BERYL BAINBRIDGE has won the Whitbread Novel Award for the second time with her book *Every Man For Himself* — nearly 20 years after she won it with *Injury Time* in 1977. It is one of four £2,000 category winners, each of which will be considered for the overall £21,000 Whitbread Book of the Year Prize, to be announced on January 21.

This year, for the first time, the Whitbread Children's Book of the Year, worth £5,000, will be announced separately on that date.

Seamus Heaney has won the Whitbread Poetry Award with *The Spirit Level*, his first collection since winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995. Heaney, too, has won the prize before, for *The Haw Lantern* in 1987. Diarmuid MacCulloch wins the Whitbread Biography Award with *Thomas Cromwell: A Life*, and John Lanchester's *The Debt to Pleasure* wins the Whitbread First Novel award.

The novel judges, Gordie Greig of *The Sunday Times*, the writer Josephine Hart and the author and broadcaster Professor Lisa Jardine, said that *Every Man For Himself*, set aboard the maiden voyage of the *Titanic*, was "an extraordinary achievement. The dangerous edge of life has rarely been more sharply delineated." The book was shortlisted for the 1996 Booker Prize but lost to Graham Swift's *Last Orders*, which, in a reversal of fortunes, made the Whitbread shortlist.

Bainbridge said of the news: "I was told about it a few weeks ago and had to keep quiet. But when I heard I felt fantastic." She has already started her next novel.

Also on the novel shortlist were *Mr Clive* and *Mr Pige* by Neil Bartlett, *Cocaine Nights* by J.G. Ballard, *Asylum* by Patrick McGrath and *Ward Fears* by Fay Weldon.

FBI gets bogged down by girls' grisly experiments

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE FBI is busy with the work of three Belfast schoolgirls on the preservation of corpses. The students' experiments include burying dead piglets in bogs.

Agents based at the FBI academy in Quantico, Virginia, have been in regular telephone contact with the three A-level science students at the Dominican College to learn about their work. They sent the FBI volume, *Detection and Recovery of Human Remains*, to assist them.

Ciara McGoldrick, Fiona Fraser and Emma McQuillan, all 17, got in touch with the FBI

after they had compared the preservation and decay of corpses in bogs and in normal conditions. Miss Fraser said: "I remembered from the *Silence of the Lambs* film that the FBI academy was in Quantico. So we asked for the number from directory inquiries and were put through to the evidence response team. They were very helpful."

The FBI was keen to hear about the experiments on dead piglets, which involved burying some in bogs and studying others left above ground in a corner of the school garden. A stillborn piglet buried in Co

Donegal in the Irish Republic was perfectly preserved when dug up after six weeks. The teenagers said it had been preserved by a combination of the conditions in the bog and the condition of the animal when it was buried. Because it was stillborn, there was no bacteria in the gut to eat away at the corpse. Another animal, which was not stillborn, rotted in the bog.

Miss McGoldrick said: "This was a very important finding because all the books on this area say that the conditions of the bog are crucial to the survival of the corpse. But we showed that other factors, such as the state of the corpse at the time of burial, are also important."

The teenagers also uncovered important new evidence about the piglets that were kept above ground. They found that different flies and insects would eat the piglets as they passed through four stages of decay.

The students were inspired by the American thriller *The Body Farm*, by Patricia Cornwell. It tells the story of scientists at the University of Tennessee who investigate the decomposition of bodies in different conditions.



Misses Fraser, McQuillan, McGoldrick and bones

Tests with Alzheimer patients reveal a drug to remember

Alzheimer's disease is so common yet so disabling that news of any possible treatment causes immediate excitement. The Food and Drug Administration, the American drug-licensing authority, has just approved the use of the drug Aricept for this condition.

Aricept has been tested on 2,000 patients worldwide, including trials in Britain, centred on Manchester. The British statistics have still to be analysed but early reports suggest that about half of those given the drug in America showed improvement in

their memory. All the patients chosen for the test had mild or moderate Alzheimer's. The disease had not reached the stage where their personalities were disintegrating. The only symptom ameliorated by Aricept was forgetfulness.

Professor Alistair Burns of Manchester University, who has been collating the British research, said: "At last, after years of research, this is a potential treatment for one of the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. This is no miracle cure but it is effective in improving the memory of some patients. The drug is



well tolerated, better tolerated than Tacrine."

Seventy-five per cent of cases of dementia in the over-65s are the result of Alzheimer's disease in which intelligent, charming and socially adept persons regress to being forgetful, then suffering short-term severe memory loss, until finally their intellect

disintegrates. The patient becomes incoherent, disoriented, deluded, agitated and restless. Physically, the disease is characterised by the deposition of beta-amyloid in the brain. The basic biochemical characteristic of Alzheimer's disease is a deficiency of the chemical acetylcholine, which

is a neurotransmitter. Aricept increases the level of acetylcholine by inhibiting the action of cholinesterase, the enzyme that neutralises the neurotransmitter. Thus the level of acetylcholine is to some extent restored to the level found when the patient was in possession of their faculties.

Tacrine, which has the same properties as Aricept, was not approved for use in Britain because its benefits to patients were meagre and 20 to 33 per cent of those treated developed hepatitis.

Aricept is likely to be expensive. But it is estimated that senile dementia costs the country more than £1 billion a year. If patients could be kept at home longer, not only would they be much happier but the cost of care would be substantially reduced.

Although drug treatment for Alzheimer's has been disappointing, one of the ironies of medicine is that two common vices can help to delay its onset. Smokers have a reduced incidence of Alzheimer's and there is increasing research evidence that moderate drinkers tend to be rather intellectually sharper in



Ahmed in hospital after the machete attack

LISA POTTS, the nursery nurse who shielded pupils from a machete attack last summer, was greeted by a three-year-old survivor when she returned to work yesterday.

Ahmed Malik suffered a 5in gash across his scalp and a fractured skull in the attack at St Luke's Church of England School in Wolverhampton. He was one of three children injured when Horrett Campbell, a paranoid schizophrenic, ran amok with a 2ft machete in July.

Miss Potts, 21, suffered deep wounds to her back, chest and hands, a broken arm and severed tendons in her hands as she tried to shield the children from Campbell's blows. Three other adults were injured in the attack.

Ahmed has been back to

happy and peaceful 1997 away from the glare of publicity. Campbell was found guilty last month of seven charges of attempted murder. He is due to be sentenced next month.

St Luke's reopened a week after the attack. Fences were set up around the school and security alarms issued to staff. Family doctors are employing security guards to deal with violent patients, because of a growing risk of assault. At the St John's Way health centre in Archway, north London, where a GP nearly died from knife wounds in 1995, two guards spend two hours each evening beside the receptionists' counter. Their weekly wages of £50 are paid by the health authority. In Birmingham and Southampton, several surgeries have security guards who escort staff on and off the premises to deter muggers, and to keep order in the waiting room.

Greenwich father accepts school ban

By STEPHEN FARRELL

DAVID JENNINGS, the former soldier who allegedly threatened to "do a Dunblane", gave an undertaking in the High Court yesterday not to approach schools or to buy a firearm. It followed an application by Greenwich council for a permanent injunction banning him from council buildings near his home in Abbey Wood, southeast London.

Jennings, 51, who has a firearms conviction, has made a series of complaints about caretakers looking after four of his ten children. He allegedly made the Dunblane threat to a chaplain at High Point prison, Suffolk, last year

and the council won a temporary injunction last week before his release from a 30-month sentence for affray.

After a five-minute hearing before a judge in chambers, lawyers for Jennings, the council and the Attorney-General announced that the issue had been resolved by mutual agreement. The indefinite undertaking forbids Jennings from acquiring or carrying a firearm or other offensive weapon, visiting schools or council premises without prior agreement, going within 50 to 100 yards of some buildings, and assaulting or threatening staff, pupils or teachers. He can be jailed if he breaches the terms.

Jennings, who declined to comment,

stood outside court in green prison-issue clothes as James Bancroft, his solicitor, read a statement. "Mr Jennings would like to give his absolute assurance to the public that he does not possess dangerous weapons and never intended to cause anxiety to parents in the area, of which he is one himself. However, he feels that this matter has been blown out of all proportion by the London Borough of Greenwich and has resulted in a huge and unnecessary waste of public money."

One school formerly attended by Jennings' children will remain shut when term starts today as workmen fit security measures demanded by parents. Many have refused to send their children back.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

The first of these is the
 fact that the majority of
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 United States is of
 European descent. This
 fact is of great importance
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* On the road price applies to 306 Meridian 1.6 petrol 5 door with sunroof. ** On the road price applies to 306 Meridian 1.6 petrol 5 door with air conditioning. Air conditioning available on petrol model only. Prices quoted include delivery to dealership, number plates and 12 months' Road Fund Licence. † Cells charged at local rate. Insurance offer applies to drivers aged 27-75 years old, holding a full, valid UK driving licence for one year or more, ordering and registering any new Peugeot 306 Meridian model only between 12.19.96 and 31.3.97 and is subject to the terms, conditions and exclusions of the Insurance Policy. Personal Insurance Ltd on (01303) 853 303. Drivers convicted of a major driving offence in the last 5 years are automatically excluded. Insurance offer applies to private sales only (excluding Motability and any car involved by Peugeot Export) and is not available for hire, fleet, rental, commercial, or other use. Full details available on request. Prices correct at time of going to press. Vehicles offered subject to availability whilst stocks last.

Results of survey could raise Labour doubts over commitment to abolishing scheme

Lone parents will be 'worst hit' by ending of assisted places

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

SINGLE mothers would be among the biggest losers if a Labour government fulfilled the party's pledge to abolish the Assisted Places Scheme, according to research to be published this month.

Preliminary results of a survey in the group of schools with the largest concentration of assisted places showed that more than a third of those benefiting from the scheme were single parents. Almost the same proportion of the 1,710 families that responded earned less than £10,000 a year.

Evidence that Labour would be hitting one of the groups where its support is generally strongest will raise fresh doubts about the commitment to phase out the scheme, which provides help with independent school fees for low-income families.

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, has said that no new assisted places would be awarded if Labour won the general election. The savings from the £141 million scheme would be used to reduce class sizes in the first two years of primary schooling in the state system.

Mr Blunkett underlined the commitment in a speech to the North of England Education Conference in Sheffield at the weekend. He said he agreed with George Walden, the former Tory Education Minister, who decried the scheme as creative accounting for mid-

dle-class parents and wrote: "There are only two things wrong with the Assisted Places Scheme: the principle and the practice."

Labour would use the money earmarked for assisted places to ensure that no state school pupil under seven was in a class of more than 30. A spokesman said yesterday that 500,000 children would benefit from the switch, compared with the 32,000 receiving subsidised fees.

However, Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, says that the savings from the scheme would provide only one extra teacher for every eight schools. Its abolition would deny opportunities to bright children whose parents could not afford the schools of their choice.

More than half of the parents in the survey said they

had applied to the scheme mainly because they could not afford the independent education they desired for their children. In London, a third also cited poor state schools in their area.

The survey was carried out last October in the 26 schools managed by the Girls Public Day School Trust, where almost a quarter of secondary pupils have assisted places. The trust's schools, nearly half of which are in London, account for one in ten of all places in the scheme.

Questionnaires were sent to all 3,000 families whose children had assisted places. More than half replied. A total of 34 per cent of those were divorced or single parents. Almost 90 per cent of all those surveyed said they could not have afforded to educate a daughter independently without an assisted place. Only 2 per cent admitted that they could have found the money.

Almost two thirds of those responding received at least £3,000 a year from the scheme while four out of ten received the full fee of up to £4,900. Three quarters had sent their daughters to state schools before applying for a subsidised place.

Not surprisingly, 94 per cent of those surveyed supported the retention of the scheme, with another 4 per cent either undecided or refusing to answer. Only 2 per cent supported Labour's policy.

THE FIGURES

The Assisted Places Scheme was set up in 1980. Since then up to 100,000 pupils have been helped by the scheme, which costs £120 million a year. In September it was extended from 6,000 to 10,000 places a year. Nearly 40,000 pupils are now receiving help. Two fifths of the families involved earn less than £10,000 a year and four fifths receive less than the national average income.



Pamela Hobbs with Louise, a pupil of Birkenhead High School. "She has the intelligence and enthusiasm"

'There is no way I could pay a penny'

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

LOUISE HOBBS could not have attended a leading independent school in northwest England without the Assisted Places Scheme. The scheme covers the annual fee of nearly £4,000 for 15-year-old Louise to study at Birkenhead High School, which came second in the GCSE league table in the Wirral area this summer.

Pamela, her mother, is unemployed with four children and said she could not afford anything towards her daughter's education. The scheme allowed Ms Hobbs to choose between Birkenhead

High and two state girls' schools, West Kirby Grammar and Upton Hall, which also have strong academic records.

Louise passed the entry tests for all three schools and, although West Kirby's GCSE results are only slightly lower than those at Birkenhead High, Ms Hobbs said they chose the school for its better examination results and smaller classes.

She added: "I have got an older daughter and I was able to pay for her education because I was in a partnership at the time. There is no way now I could pay a penny. I knew Louise had the intelligence and the enthusiasm to go somewhere like that, but I could not afford it." Louise, who is preparing to

take nine GCSEs this summer, said: "I knew Birkenhead had the best results and they make sure you get the right education. I want to stay on and do three A levels and, hopefully, go to university."

Dick Davidson, deputy director of the Independent Schools Information Service, denied that the Hobbses were misusing the scheme because it was paying for Louise to attend an independent selective school rather than a state grammar. The whole point was that the scheme offered greater choice, he said. "It was never part of the justification that state schools were not good. It was to provide access to a different kind of education if parents wanted it."

Free help at home is a vanishing hope for the disabled and elderly

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE chances of free home help for the disabled and elderly is increasingly becoming a lottery depending on where they live, according to a study published today. Only 7 per cent of local authorities still provide free care, compared with 17 per cent two years ago.

Charges range from £1 a week in Hartlepool to £320 in Surrey, the union-funded Labour Research Department says. Eleven local authorities still charge nothing: the London boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hammersmith & Fulham; the

English counties of Cumbria and Derbyshire; the metropolitan districts of Manchester and Wolverhampton; and Fife and West Lothian in Scotland. All but Cumbria are controlled by Labour.

Almost two-thirds of the 148 local authorities in Great Britain have a minimum charge for home care, even for people on benefits. Most councils decide charges according to a person's income or the level of service received but there are great variations.

The report in *Labour Research* magazine says: "Among councils with this system and who charge all users something, minimum charges range from £1-a-week in Hartlepool to £5-an-hour in Bury. Maximums range from

£5 a week in north-east Lincolnshire to £320 a week in Surrey." Flat-rate charges, which take no account of ability to pay, are imposed by 13 authorities, mainly Labour, although some of these still provide free services to people on income support or pensions.

Councils are obliged to provide home helps and have been able to charge for them since 1983, although the fees must be reasonably practicable. After Parliament transferred responsibility from the NHS to local authorities in 1990, charging became widespread. Government funding assumes that councils recoup about 10 per cent of the cost. Local authorities that still provide free home care must

find the money elsewhere in their budgets.

Alan Rhodes, head of social services resources for Surrey, said only one person paid £320 a week. For that, the council would provide care for at least 40 hours. A means test meant 60 per cent of people in the county received free care. Nine out of ten users were elderly.

□ Highest maximum weekly charges (with party political control): Surrey (no overall control) £320; Hartlepool (Lab) £92.25; Richmond upon Thames (Lib Dem) £92 (based on £368 per month); Stockton-on-Tees (Lab) £90; Stockport (NOC) £73.13; Scottish Borders (NOC) £67.80; Dorset (Lib Dem) £62; Angus (SNP) £60; Perth & Kinross (SNP) £60; Liverpool (Lab) £56.

Revised schools code will stress value of marriage

By JOHN O'LEARY

A COMPROMISE on the place of marriage in the proposed moral code for schools was agreed yesterday by government advisers.

Recommendations to be put to the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority later this month will insert a point into the "statement of values" emphasising support for the institution of marriage. But a subsequent paragraph will recognise that the "love and commitment required for a secure and happy childhood can be found in families of different kinds".

The original statement, drawn up by a 150-strong forum, made no direct mention of marriage, although

support for family life was included. Critics claimed that the omission would undermine traditional values and five members of the forum refused to endorse the document published last year.

About half the members of the forum met in London yesterday after extensive testing of opinion among parents, teachers and members of the public. The research showed overwhelming support for the statement, which contained 30 principles for action covering personal issues, society, relationships and the environment. Several amendments to the proposed code were agreed without difficulty yesterday. Among them was respect for the rule of law.

The issue of marriage con-

tinued to prove controversial, however. Some groups argued that teachers could not promote marriage in schools where most pupils came from broken homes. A minority continued to press for its inclusion in detailed terms. Five forum members refuse to accept the compromise, which will be put to Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, if it is endorsed by the authority.

Another recommendation from yesterday's meeting will see the production of model syllabuses on moral, spiritual and "citizenship" education for use in schools. The syllabuses, the code showed, aroused demand for courses designed along the lines of those available in religious education.

Sight of stocking can be shocking to drivers

By TIM JONES

THE two main motoring organisations were at odds yesterday over whether huge advertising posters by the roadside displaying the female form can cause drivers to crash.

The spat between the AA and the RAC centres around a 30ft hoarding near the sliproad to the M11 in Barking, east London, which shows a pair of long legs in lace-topped Pretty Polly stockings. The advertisement is one of 300 around the country.

According to the AA, such posters can be dangerous as they distract motorists when they should be concentrating on the hazards of the road. A spokeswoman said: "Drivers must learn to be disciplined and not allow them [the advertisements] to take up too much of their time. They could be dangerous, but no more so than a low-flying plane or a pretty girl or attractive man walking by."

That warning was dismissed by Edmund King, of the RAC, who claimed that such distractions could be of benefit to motorists caught in slow-moving traffic or faced with a long journey. He said: "To suggest they are dangerous is just barking and an insult to motorists. All our research indicates that drivers benefit from things which improve their attention span."

Mr King said that in Scotland and France, works of art such as sculptures were deliberately placed close to motorways to help tired drivers to maintain their awareness. He added: "About one in five accidents are caused because of driver fatigue, so these posters are, if anything, an aid to safety."

Drivers, he claimed, were far more liable to crash because they changed the station on their car radio than because they glanced at a poster which was in their field of vision.

A spokeswoman for Pretty Polly said: "We are promoting happy drivers, not dangerous drivers. The poster is not a danger, it just brings a little fun to driving."

Similar concerns were expressed over posters that showed a topless model lying on her stomach in a pair of Wolford's Fair Neutights.

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Murder rate in America dips for third year

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE number of murders in America dropped by 7 per cent in the first half of last year, continuing a three-year trend, according to the latest nationwide survey by the FBI.

The figures show that the improvement is driven by a sharp fall in crime in big cities. President Clinton, who made crime-fighting a central plank in his election campaign, depriving Republicans of one of their most popular themes, said that the figures marked the fifth successive year of falling crime and the longest period of declining crime rates since 1969.

"We are making a difference," the President said. "Today our neighbourhoods are

safer, and we are restoring the American people's confidence that crime can be reduced."

The FBI figures show a three per cent overall fall in reported serious crimes. Burglaries and aggravated assault fell by 5 per cent and motor vehicle theft by 4 per cent. Arson, up by 2 per cent, was the only offence to show a rise.

Janet Reno, Attorney General, attributed the falls to "more police on the street, fewer guns in the wrong hands, more prosecutors and more jail cells to keep criminals behind bars". Between 1980 and 1995, the country's total prison population increased by more than 240 per cent to 1.1 million

prisoners. However, crime experts dispute the Administration's claims that it should take all the credit for the improvement. One of the main factors behind the improvement — the ageing of the population — owes nothing to politicians' efforts. Compared with a decade ago, there are fewer young men in their late teens, a group disproportionately likely to commit crime.

New policing methods, pioneered in New York in the 1980s and widely copied by other city mayors, are also thought to have helped. Police have encouraged communities to become more involved and report more crimes, while cities have followed New York's policy of cleaning up graffiti and litter in rough neighbourhoods on the theory that orderliness encourages lawful behaviour.

In New York City, often used as the national benchmark for urban crime, there were 507 murders in the first half of last year compared to 574 in the same period of 1995. New York's own recent survey showed that murders in the whole of 1996 dipped below 1,000 for the first time since 1968.

However, the American capital was one of the few blackspots in the FBI survey. Washington, where local government is in a state of crisis, recorded 199 homicides in the first six months compared with 158 during the first half of 1995. The South was the only region of the US to show an overall increase — 3 per cent — in reported crime.

Car death envoy faces US charges

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE United States may request a waiver of immunity to prosecute a senior Georgian diplomat whose car was involved in a multiple pile-up in Washington.

The State Department said yesterday that the case was a serious matter but it was awaiting a report on possible criminal charges before seeking the waiver for Georgi Makharadze, the second-ranking official in the Washington embassy of the former Soviet republic of Georgia.

Police said his car sped into Dupont Circle, a major roundabout, and crashed into the back of another car that took off and landed on a third car, before hitting a further two vehicles. Jovianne Waltrick, 40, a front-seat passenger in the third car, was killed.

Police said they believe that speeding and alcohol were factors in the accident last week. An embassy spokesman said, however, that the car was being inspected for brake failure. The episode was the latest in a series of incidents in Washington that have raised public concern about the impunity of diplomats. Mr

Makharadze, who suffered only minor injuries but was said to be in deep shock, sent a letter of apology to the family of Miss Waltrick. It said: "I cannot express adequately in words my sorrow for having been part of this horrible tragedy or for the pain it causes and will continue to cause to her family and friends."

Under international law, the State Department can ask Georgia to waive immunity, but it would be up to his country to give consent. Eduard Shevardnadze, the President of Georgia, who is keen to retain cordial relations with the United States, hinted that the diplomat might pay some penalty. In a letter of condolence to the girl's family, Mr Shevardnadze said that the diplomat "must bear responsibility for the incident in accordance with norms".

David Richin, the family's lawyer, said the case amounted to murder and there had to be some recourse to justice. "You don't drive 100 miles an hour intoxicated and call it an accident," he said, although no figure for the car's speed had been released by police.



Renato: putting more police on street

Ex-Canadian leader settles libel action

FROM RICHARD CLEROUX IN OTTAWA

BRIAN MULRONEY, the former Canadian Prime Minister, has settled out of court his \$50 million (£21.7 million) libel action against the Government in Ottawa.

The Canadian Government had alleged in a letter to Swiss authorities that Mr Mulroney had accepted \$5 million in kickbacks in the purchase by Air Canada of 34 Airbus jets in 1988.

The case was to have begun in Montreal yesterday but an eleventh-hour agreement was reached between lawyers from both sides. Under the terms of the settlement the Govern-

ment is to pay Mr Mulroney's legal and other expenses which could reach \$52 million, while the former Prime Minister has dropped his damages claim.

Mr Mulroney's lawyers said his name had been "totally vindicated" and that the Government had apologised for any damage to his reputation.

Allan Rock, the Justice Minister, said the settlement did not stop the police investigation into the Airbus scandal and the Government had simply apologised for the wording of the letter.

Divorce for disgraced Clinton aide

BY IAN BRODIE

DICK MORRIS, whose affair with a prostitute led to his resignation as President Clinton's top adviser, was distraught yesterday by his wife's decision to divorce him.

Eileen McGarr, a lawyer, said she knew he was very sad about them going their separate ways after 20 years of marriage, but he was much stronger than five months ago when his disgrace became public.

In a statement, Mr Morris said: "More than anything else I wanted to stay married to Eileen... I'm devastated and deeply upset."

Mr Morris has been living apart from his wife and undergoing psychotherapy. There are reports that he and Mr Clinton, who planned political campaigns together off and on for 20 years, still talk frequently by telephone. Mr Morris's book on presidential politics, for which he will be paid \$25 million (£1.5 million) is due out this month.

Mr Morris had hoped his founding marriage could be rescued, but his year-long affair with Sherry Rowlands, a \$200-an-hour Washington prostitute, was not the only complication in his marriage. He also had an 11-year affair with Barbara Jean Pfaffin, a Texas estate agent. They have a daughter, now aged six.



Police try to persuade Jack Petelui not to give up his hold on a balcony at Manhattan's Ansonia Hotel. Moments later he fell 30 ft from the third floor. But thanks to a large air bag which police had inflated on the pavement, he was unharmed (Quentin Letts writes).

The bag is a state-of-the-art device introduced by authorities to reduce the number of fatal leaps by suicidal New Yorkers. Mr Petelui, 43, had scaled the outside of the block in his

Air bag saves man in fall

underpants on Sunday. Seemingly troubled, he shouted to police and pedestrians that he was climbing the Ansonia Hotel "on the instructions of God" and was not to be disturbed. When he fell his arms flailed and there were gasps from onlookers, but instead of a sickening thud, his rapid descent ended in a whoosh

from the large, inflatable pillow. A surprised Mr Petelui was still bouncing up and down on his back when he was arrested, handcuffed, by police officers and taken away for psychiatric tests. Earlier he entered a local coffee shop and stripped off to his underpants and a green vest before starting the barefooted ascent

of the building, a 1904 Beaux-Arts structure which in its time has been home to Stravinsky, Caruso and Toscanini, among others. His ascent was aided by the cornices which decorate the Ansonia.

Police who arrived early at the scene kept the shivering Mr Petelui talking for an hour while the 10 ft-wide safety pillow was transported from a distant precinct and was inflated. He repeatedly stated that "God told me to climb".

Reform of Peru's 'medieval' jails offers solution to hostage siege

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN LIMA

A COMMITMENT to improve harsh conditions in Peruvian prisons could be the only bargaining point that President Fujimori has left to assure a bloodless end to the hostage crisis.

The Tupac Amaru rebels, who still hold 74 hostages in the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima which they stormed on December 17, said they would not let their captives go until about 400 of their comrades were released from "inhuman jails". But they have also shown that they may be prepared to accept a promise of prison reforms.

"Fujimori could commit himself to improving the abject conditions in the prisons, without looking like he is caving in to the terrorists' demands," a Western diplomat said. "Those prisons where captured rebels are kept are like the dungeons of the Middle Ages. They desperately need reform."

Senior Fujimori's autocratic Government has a poor human rights record and the Peruvian jails are the starkest proof of this. Hundreds of prisoners accused of "terrorism" are shut away in tiny,

windowless underground cells where disease is rampant because latrines are holes in the ground. Convicts are allowed a glimpse of the sky once a week for half an hour and receive one visitor a month.

"The prisons are like coffins. They are no bigger than two metres long and a metre wide, and have very little air," said Francisco Soberon, a human rights activist. "We have reports of systematic torture and it is not unusual for prisoners to disappear, usually in a body bag," he added.

Most of the jailed members of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) are kept in the Yanamayo prison on the shores of Lake Titicaca, 3,500 metres above sea level, the highest lake in the world. Here the temperature hardly ever rises above 9°C (48°F) and is usually well below zero.

The high security prison, housing about 500 inmates, is built into the side of a mountain and its tiny cells are windowless caves. I managed to get into this prison two years ago and guards boasted about the harsh treatment

given to prisoners. "Sometimes we don't let them see the sky for days. Very often we forget to give them food and lots of them just freeze to death. But they deserve it — they are just terrorists," one guard said.

The most closely guarded inmates at Yanamayo are six members of the Tupac Amaru's central command unit, who have been captured within the past five years, all of them serving life sentences for treason.

Also among them is Lori



Fujimori: could offer to improve conditions

Berensen, a 27-year-old New Yorker, who was sentenced to life in prison 18 months ago by a military court, made up of judges wearing balacavas. She admitted being a member of the rebel group and was accused of taking part in a failed attempt to take over the congress in 1995.

Human rights activists and American authorities have waged a campaign to have Berensen retried by a civilian court. She has been allowed one visit from her mother since she was jailed.

Victor Polay Campos, the Tupac Amaru rebels' leader, is held separately in a specially-built underground bunker at the naval headquarters in Callao, just outside Lima. He was caught in June 1992 and displayed to the media before being lowered into a cell, inside a cage.

Human rights workers say Polay has had little contact with the outside world and spends months on end in total darkness. "I have seen my son three times in four years. He is subjected to inhuman treatment and is dying slowly," said Ottilia Polay, the rebel leader's mother.

There is speculation now about the future ownership of the Empire State office block. Mr Helmsley's widow, Leona, may struggle to maintain ownership not only of the Empire State but also of many other chunks of Manhattan which comprised Mr Helmsley's \$1.7 billion (£1 billion) business enterprise. Ownership of the Empire State Building is a matter of machismo in New York property circles and, Donald Trump, among others, is expected to make a bid for it.

However, for Harry Helmsley, ownership of the building was not enough to secure him a reputation of his own. His public image was formed almost entirely by his law-breaking wife, who was jailed for tax evasion after a trial at which she declared that taxes were only for "little people".

Lights go out for New York tycoon

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

MANHATTAN'S brilliant night skyline will be duller all this week following the death of the 87-year-old property developer Harry Helmsley. The lights on the Empire State Building have been switched off in tribute to Mr Helmsley, who owned the skyscraper.

Within minutes of his death on Sunday night the building was plunged into darkness, signalling to people across the city that its owner had died after a long illness.

The building's lights are nocturnal New York's central decoration, and under Mr Helmsley's instructions were apt to change nightly. On Frank "Blue Eyes" Sinatra's birthday, for instance, they would shine blue, while on Independence Day it was red, white and blue. When the Iran hostages returned the lights were yellow, symbolising yellow ribbons of welcome.

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Chrysler heads race for hydrogen cars

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A MORE environmentally friendly car powered by hydrogen could be on the market in nine years, one of the world's big automobile makers claimed yesterday.

Fumes from the car, which will be up to 50 per cent more fuel efficient, will be water vapour and carbon dioxide. The development, announced yesterday at the North American International Auto Show, has been made by Chrysler, America's third largest car maker. It says the answer to cleaning city air is

not battery power but fuel cells.

They use a catalyst to react with hydrogen and oxygen from the air to turn an electric motor and were demonstrated more than 150 years ago in London. But their use as a car power pack has been limited by the size of the cells required and the power delivered.

Nevertheless several car makers have been racing to develop light-weight efficient fuel cells to meet American clean-air legislation. The Chrysler version uses a "re-

former" that turns low octane petrol into the hydrogen fuel.

Some companies envisage vast processing factories to generate hydrogen to be supplied to a network of hydrogen filling stations. But Francois Castaing, Chrysler's vice-president of vehicle engineering, said: "We believe hydrogen needs to be processed from gasoline on board vehicles."

Dr Gary Acres, a fuel expert at Johnson Matthey in Sonning Common, Berkshire, said yesterday that fuel cell emissions would make smog a

thing of the past. Daimler-Benz, which last year unveiled a fuel cell-powered vehicle, that ran on pure hydrogen, is also working on a reformer to generate hydrogen from petrol.

Critics claim such systems are no solution because they still rely on petrol.

The Union of Concerned Scientists said: "The true promise of fuel-cell technology will only be realised through the use of renewable fuels, such as hydrogen, methanol or ethanol."

Washington's diners mourn passing of gravy train

BY IAN BRODIE

TIMES are lean along Gucci Gulch, the marble corridors of Congress where lobbyists try to influence members before they vote on legislation.

Things are even worse outside on Capitol Hill where at least one restaurant has closed and others are suffering a serious loss of revenue.

The hardships are caused by a sweeping ban, just entering its second year, on members of Congress accepting gifts, including invitations to dinner or lunch, at someone else's expense. Some in Congress are beginning to wonder if they have taken the puritanical ethic too far.

Luckily for diplomats, foreign gov-

ernments are not regarded as lobbyists and can carry on entertaining. Sir John Kerr, Britain's Ambassador, has noticed no falling-off in acceptances for dinners and lunches at his magnificent Lutyens residence.

But elsewhere the draught has been severe. At Le Mistral restaurant two blocks from Congress, the owner, Joseph Alonzo, has seen lunch trade all but vanish. He dismissed 35 staff and opens now only for private parties. At another restaurant, La Colline, revenue fell \$400,000 (£240,000) in the past year. The loss of 10 per cent sales tax on restaurant meals is also a blow to Washington city council, already on its uppers.

Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffing-

ton, a conservative commentator, invited several members of Congress to her mansion for a candlelit dinner of sorrel soup, rack of lamb and sorbet. Next day, she totted up the cost of the ingredients, as requested, and was prepared to bill each guest for their share of the meal, about \$26. None of them paid, after deciding she was a friend and so was exempt from the restrictions, but the episode showed how wary Washington has become.

The restrictions were passed to correct the view that Washington had become a gift-giving Eden where largesse and favours went hand in hand. Gifts of any value were banned for House members. A limit of \$50 was imposed on senators.

Also excluded were the ever-popular golf and skiing trips where corporate benefactors picked up the tab. Lunch and dinner invitations are out unless the host is a relative, personal friend or sponsor of a charitable function.

As rendered by bureaucrats some of the rules are a maze. Complimentary tickets to charities can be accepted, unless they have been bought by a corporation. In that case, says a stern memorandum, members "may not accept the invitation of the corporation's chief executive to sit at his table".

In despair, some members wanted to ease the regulations, but the risk of being seen as favouring a resumption of gift-giving had a chilling effect and the effort collapsed.



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Whistling protest signals failure of Milosevic regime

NOT even the riot police in their Star Wars outfits can shield President Milosevic from the clamour of protest that carries up to his office.

It is 7.30pm and the start of state television and radio news. Heading the call of Vuk Draskovic, the opposition leader, to block out the regime's media propaganda with a wall of sound, hundreds of thousands in the city are blowing whistles, hooting car horns, setting off fireworks, banging pans, drums — anything to produce an overwhelming noise.

The effect is awesome, a still, defiant cacophony that makes the skin prickle. But it is the noise from booming flats in nearby Banja that most disturbs the President. There the sound is frenzied. More people, more protest, more noise than elsewhere in the city. And that casts dark shadows into his Christmas Eve. For Banja is the military quarter and the thousands of angry people there, the officers, soldiers and families of the Yugoslav Army, are enraged.

Even the army's supreme

In an ominous signal to the President, the army last night assured students it would not intervene as protests enter an eighth week. Anthony Loyd reports in Belgrade

command has sought to distance itself. Yesterday, on the Orthodox Church's Christmas Eve, General Miroslav Perisic, the most senior commander, issued a public communiqué saying: "The army will operate within the constitution so that the current problems will be overcome in a peaceful manner similar to that of democratic countries."

Something is happening in Belgrade more substantial than protests over rigged municipal elections. Serbs want their share of the political change that swept aside dictatorships across eastern Europe. Religion, nationhood, history, war, passion, darkness and tragedy, the soul in each Serb is a wild and complex entity. War has played a disproportionate role in shaping the Serb identity, so it is no irony that percep-

tion of the most recent bloodshed has turned full circle to confront the man who began it, and that among those most angry are those most directly involved in the fighting.

"Milosevic led us into war, then lost it and blamed us," says Predrag, a soldier and veteran of action in Croatia and Bosnia. "Serbs have a tradition of fighting for noble causes but to get us to fight one another Milosevic played on our worst trait — our sense of dishonour — and the whole thing became a ghastly circle of atrocity and cleansing, shaming us all. We must have been in some kind of psychosis."

The war seems to be in the mind of every protesting Serb, and it is not merely losing President Milosevic's battle for a Greater Serbia that makes them angry. "What did



German soldiers stand guard at a Nato base outside Sarajevo, breaking with a post-Second World War taboo on deploying troops abroad

Milosevic give us?" asked Mr Draskovic rhetorically in an interview with *The Times*. "Bloodshed, civil war, hatred, tragedy and graves. The protesters you see on the streets now represent the face of the real Serbia ... We are for

multi-ethnicity and democracy, not the Serbia Milosevic showed the world, the place of cleansing and atrocity in which our people shelled cities like Sarajevo, killed prisoners and performed atrocities."

It is no coincidence that in this gale of self-examination the Orthodox Church has joined the protesters. After last night's procession through Belgrade thousands followed the Orthodox Patriarch His Holiness Pavle to burn ceremonially the Yule branch

at Saint Sava's Cathedral — a symbol of protest, confession and contrition. In Sarajevo the first German troops to take part in the Nato-led peace force in Bosnia arrived yesterday to join a combined German-French

brigade. About 120 soldiers flew in from their base in Cologne, and were transported to Rajlovac barracks, about seven miles northwest of the city.

Leading article, page 17

Yeltsin kept from defence meeting by 'heavy cold'

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday cancelled meetings scheduled for this week complaining of a "heavy cold and a high temperature", and raising fresh doubts about his state of health.

Only a fortnight after he returned to work vowing to reinvigorate his leadership, following a prolonged absence for most of the second half of 1996, the Russian leader was again ordered to rest by his doctors. Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the Kremlin spokesman, emphasised that the current health problems were not connected with President Yeltsin's multiple heart bypass surgery in November. Rather, he insisted, the Russian leader, like other members of his family, had succumbed to a bout of flu.

Aside from the renewed fears raised by President Yeltsin's latest absence from office, his illness may nevertheless prove politically beneficial since it forced the postponement of a potentially stormy meeting of the Defence Council scheduled for tomorrow.

According to reports in the Russian press, Igor Rodionov, the Russian Defence Minister, has threatened to tender his resignation in protest over the inadequate funding for the armed forces in this year's budget and proposed cuts to troop levels. Although the Defence Ministry denied the reports, military sources did confirm that fundamental differences exist between Mr

Rodionov, a former general, and Yuri Shturim, the head of the Defence Council, over how to proceed in reforming the armed forces.

A clash between the two was widely anticipated as the deadline which President Yeltsin, as the commander in chief of the military, would have had to settle. For now the decision has been put off, although in the near future the Russian leader will have to tackle the very real crisis facing the impoverished and demoralised 1.5 million-strong military.

The army, the navy and air force are slowly disintegrating with fresh horror stories every day about conditions in the ranks. For instance, many Russian troops who completed their withdrawal from Chechnya at the weekend, have nowhere to live. Entire units, based in the northern Caucasus, are living in sub-zero temperatures under canvas relying for supplies on the charity of local farmers.

London: President Yeltsin stepped up his country's opposition to Nato expansion in weekend talks with Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor. Western diplomatic sources said. They said the Russian leader wanted a legally-binding commitment from the Western alliance to involve Russia in formal consultations with Nato on any issue, including enlargement, which would give Moscow huge influence over alliance decisions. (Reuters)



President Yeltsin and Viktor Chernomyrdin, right, the Prime Minister, at yesterday's talks on Nato

French pick over 'sphinx' legacy

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE legacy of François Mitterrand will be thrown into sharp relief tomorrow with a series of grand and solemn events marking the first anniversary of his death, and a contrasting avalanche of books and articles depicting the former President as a deceitful manipulator with an obsessive "Casanova complex".

A year after Mitterrand died from prostate cancer on January 8, France remains deeply intrigued by the enigma of the "sphinx" who ruled the country for 14 years. Mitterrand's posthumous reputation has been torn apart by disclosures that he knew about his illness since taking office, but concealed the truth for more than a decade.

This week Pierre Mauroy, Mitterrand's first Prime Minister, admitted that he had been told of the President's cancer "right from the start".

In a book published soon after Mitterrand's death, Claude Gubler, his personal physician, described how his former boss had insisted on secrecy despite a public promise of "openness"

about his health. The book was banned within 24 hours of publication after the Mitterrand family filed a lawsuit claiming invasion of privacy.

While Mitterrand may have been economical with the truth he was lavish with his affections, according to a new book by Georges-Marc Benamou, the young journalist picked by the President to chronicle his last years.

"He was fascinated by Casanova," M Benamou told *France-Soir*. "He couldn't go into a bar or restaurant without seeking out the face of a woman, and giving his famous wink. Even suffering from his illness, he had the sharp eye and sure touch of a veteran seducer. He loved women right to the end."

Mitterrand did nothing to hide his adulterous conquests from his wife Danielle, who suffered greatly. M Benamou said.

But while Mitterrand's personal and political morality continue to excite avid speculation, the former President's widow and political supporters are nurtur-

ing the Mitterrand myth. On Thursday, Mme Mitterrand will attend a ceremony in the southwestern town of Jarnac, where her husband was born and is buried. This will be followed by a tribute at Château Chillon in Burgundy where he served as Mayor.

Later this week the Socialist leader's allies, such as Jacques Delors, former President of the European Commission, and foreign dignitaries including President Castro of Cuba, will attend a Unesco seminar entitled "François Mitterrand — Peace and Development".

Mitterrand's devotees have pledged to protect his memory. His personal papers, left to his illegitimate daughter Mazarine, have been deposited at the newly-founded François Mitterrand Institute. Roland Dumas, a former minister who is now president of the institute, told *Le Monde* that access to the archives would be granted only to "academics or journalists following specific researches", and not "to just anyone".

Paris sends more troops to Africa

BY BEN MACINTYRE

THE French Government came under attack yesterday for becoming embroiled yet again in the internal affairs of a former African colony as additional troops were dispatched to reinforce French units in the Central African Republic after bloody clashes with army mutineers.

A day after French troops killed at least ten rebels in the capital, Bangui, in reprisal for the killing of two French officers, Lionel Jospin, France's Socialist Opposition leader, warned that the Government would get bogged down by acting as the personal guard to the republic's President Patasse.

President Chirac recently declared that France would no

longer take unilateral military action in Africa, but military spokesmen insisted the latest action by French troops in Bangui using helicopter gunships, tanks and armoured personnel carriers amounted to legitimate self-defence.

"Our aim is not to put down the mutineers, our aim is to ensure that the Central African Republic can continue its democratic process," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. The Defence Ministry meanwhile announced the deployment of 300 additional elite troops to back up the 2,000 French soldiers already in place.

French troops crushed two similar army rebellions last April and May.

Spymaster Wolf back in court on kidnap charges

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE brutal espionage war of the 1950s and 1960s will come back today to haunt Markus Wolf, the communist spymaster who faces charges of organising the kidnapping and beating of agents.

A previous attempt to jail the 73-year-old former East German general in 1993 — he was given a seven-year sentence for treason — was frustrated by the Constitutional Court which ruled that all spies from East and West Germany, should be treated equally. Since Herr Wolf was spying as an East German citizen for the legally-constituted East German state, it was deemed unjust to jail him.

Now the German prosecutors will try again and in doing so should provide a fascinating insight into the espionage skirmishes of the Cold War. Herr Wolf is charged with ordering the kidnapping and torture of a Stasi agent, Walter Thirne who defected to Austria in the 1960s. He and his wife were lured into a trap in a Vienna hotel, drugged and beaten and then taken via Prague to East Germany for a secret trial and a ten-year jail term in one of the country's toughest prisons.

In an early attempt to compromise Willy Brandt — then an active politician in West Berlin — Herr Wolf also

ordered the abduction of Christa Trapp from Berlin, according to the indictment to be presented today. Frau Trapp was a translator for the Americans in Berlin and was blackmailed into spying for East Germany.

The third main charge against Herr Wolf concerns the arrest and torture of Georg Angerer, an East German writer. The writer was supposed to have co-operated with the Gestapo in Norway and, according to the prosecutors, Herr Wolf wanted Angerer to declare that Brandt (who spent the war in Norway) was also a Gestapo agent.

Herr Wolf denies the charges, claiming they amount to persecution by the German authorities. "Even if the allegations were true, they are charges you could bring against almost any intelligence operative in East or West," he claims.

Herr Wolf, who ran East Germany's foreign intelligence agency for 30 years, may escape again, even if the charges are proved. Since the alleged crimes date from the 1950s and early 1960s, his defence team will be able to argue that they are covered by the statute of limitations.

But if nothing else the trial should dent his image before publication of his memoirs.

Animal rights protests greet Rome circus

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

HUNDREDS of animal rights protesters yesterday tried to disrupt the new year season-of-one of Europe's oldest circuses when it reverted to using tigers and rhinoceroses after a year-long "animal-free" experiment.

The protesters were led by the environmental campaigner Marchesa Marina Ripa di Meana, who chanted animal rights slogans from inside a small metal cage outside the entrance to the circus. "Despite the protests the

Orfei circus, which has been performing for nearly 200 years, played to packed houses during the Epiphany holiday.

Last March, Nando Orfei, the 61-year-old circus owner, gave in to pressure from animal rights activists and removed performing animals from his shows, relying on clowns, trapeze artists and strongmen to draw the crowds. But audiences dwindled disastrously, and yesterday Signor Orfei announced that the animals were back.

The Marchesa, the Italian "ambassador" of the World

Wildlife Fund, said the metal cage was intended to symbolise the suffering of animals in captivity.

Last year, the Marchesa, who is known for her colourful lifestyle (she boasts of her many lovers and once published an erotic strip cartoon featuring herself), was ejected from a French Embassy reception after draping a balcony with a banner protesting against nuclear testing in the Pacific. Last March, she posed asked for a series of giant roadside posters to protest against the use of fur in the fashion industry.



Ripa di Meana: made protest inside cage

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There was also no evidence to substantiate the claims made for the bacterial cultures in the new functional yoghurts, he said. "If something stimulates the immune system there must be a

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'I look forward to Blair taking over'

The liberal American economist J.K. Galbraith believes that Tony Blair is young, intelligent and original. Interview by Quentin Letts

Old people are not expected to be tall, but the economist John Kenneth Galbraith, 88, stands 6ft 7in in his socks. Someone once wondered if his great height moulded his placid nature — on the ground that being so visible in a crowd, Galbraith had to mind his manners.

Any rugby referee will tell you that second-row forwards, though beaniepole tall, like to misbehave once they have their heads down in the scrum. Galbraith's gentleness is also misleading. He is, certainly, a courteous man who speaks with an almost Jimmy Stewart drawl and greets callers to his Boston home with the grace of a lost age. In his day-to-day gatherings he is a sweetie. In political conversation, however, he will happily try to place your argument over his knee and cane it — which, incidentally, is just what he feels like doing with President Clinton for signing last year's welfare reform Bill. He talks to Clinton occasionally, but right now he is cross with the President and is not reluctant to admit it.

Galbraith belongs to that pantheon of American liberalism which includes FDR, the Kennedy brothers, Martin Luther King and the Margaret Thatcher of American politics, Eleanor Roosevelt. He has been involved in public life since the Second World War, when Roosevelt put him in charge of price control. Stints followed as presidential adviser, Ambassador to India, Harvard professor, and, in due course, *bête noire* emeritus of the American Right.

His books are held to have had an influence on the American political debate, specifically on the Left-leaning East and West Coast establishment. Inclusiveness, social conscience, environmentalism, anti-militarism, pro-minorityism; these cosy, possibly unattractive inclinations have all found their intellectual justification, and sometimes their root, in the concise, elegant prose of this lofty Canadian.

His 30 or so books have included *The Affluent Society* in 1958, *The Industrial State* in 1967, *The Age of Uncertainty* (1971), *The Anatomy of Power* (1983) through to his latest offering, *The Good Society* (Sinclair-Stevenson). Throughout, America's brainiacs have sat at his feet, earnestly taking notes, nodding their heads and thinking the world of their master in liberalism.

Mention the name Galbraith in most New York City salons today and eyes open wide in admiration. "You mean you have met him?" ask fiftysomething women, recalling cerebral college girl crushes. From Galbraith, arguably, the last generation of East Coast "Wasps" (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) learnt that it was somehow noble to toss away the privilege and rank for which predecessors had worked — only to see their place taken by more self-regarding ethnic groups.

Galbraith was born and reared in Iona Station, a dusty Ontario township where his father farmed. Young Kenneth took an agriculture degree from the University of Toronto but it was not until he reached the University of California, Berkeley, as a masters student in the early Thirties that his political batteries were charged. "A very exciting time," he recalls. "I was therein the depths of the Great Depression and I plugged in. No one expected the system to survive. It was unknown for anyone, save one or two of the older professors, to be in support of the status quo."

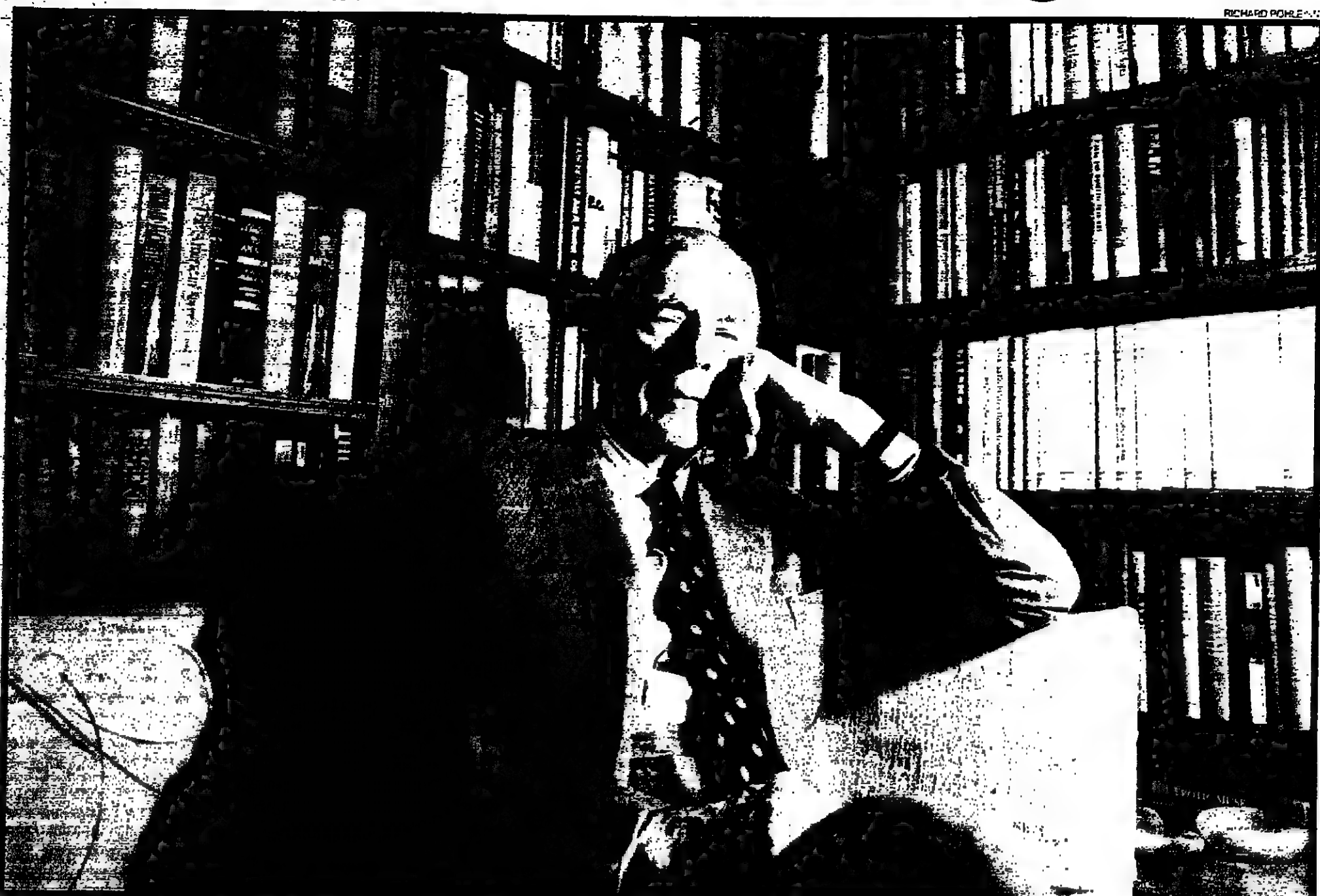
In *The Good Society* Galbraith presents his definition for the perfect polity, where people can choose not to work, where the rich take high taxes on the chin, where immigrants are welcomed and healthcare is plentiful. Workers must be permitted to organise, people must embrace the necessity of big government, and the nation-state must yield to the higher call of internationalism, of goodwill to the poor of the world.

Quite a lot of that, one realises, is now hard set in American political life. Galbraith was spurred to publish *The Good Society* when Newt Gingrich swept into Congress with his *Contract for America* — in his hall is a sticker that reads BOOT NEWT — but despite the Right's loud demands for less government, Galbraithism thrives. In modern America idleness is frequently rewarded, taxes have risen, racism, whatever the Rev Jesse Jackson might have us believe, is a great deal less common, and there are ranks of apparatchiks and regulations in place to ensure that private enterprise is checked, if not throttled.

Galbraith does not explain how a United States so blessed is at the same time so divided and, arguably, less at ease with itself than it was in the Depression. "The US does have a terrible problem with the urban poor," he concedes, before moving on.

Humour seeps out of the man, normally via understatement. On saying something amusing he leans back, his eyes closed slightly, and a faint smile played at the corners of his mouth. It gave him the look of a tortoise that has just bitten on a leaf of fresh lettuce and finds it good. I asked about Mountbatten, whom he knew. "An attractive man," says Galbraith, "moderately intelligent but not brilliant, more than adequately self-confident." The eyes did their adequately self-confident. "The eyes did their tortoise act. Despite his love of big government, he holds in awe the way the Raj was conducted with such a small complement of British civil servants. "Did you know that the British ran India with fewer people than Harvard employs in its dining halls?"

Galbraith was sent to India by John Kennedy, whom he had taught at Harvard, and who was so addicted to Galbraith's succinct, sardonic dispatches that he would ask the White House staff to let him see the ambassador's cables, even when they were addressed to other parties. After Kennedy's death Galbraith remained in Washington, advising President



"My advice to Tony Blair is that the welfare state was the great civilising force of the 20th century, that it made for the survival of capitalism and that it is still to be defended and protected"

Johnson. In the Seventies, the Carter Administration made contact, as has the current presidential circle, although Galbraith is not entirely convinced by Clinton. Kennedy and Clinton, he surmises, "both had a shrewd view of their political opposition, a measure of which was the fact that he didn't avoid the word." The L-word, indeed, rarely falls from Bill Clinton's lips.

For Clinton read Blair? Galbraith is a pin-up in Labour Party circles. He met Tony Blair recently and "maintains friendly connections". "I know many of Blair's people and I look forward to his taking over the British Government," he says. "Mr Blair seems to be young, intelligent and original. My advice to him is that the welfare state was the great civilising force of the 20th century, that it made for the survival of capitalism and that it is still to be defended and protected." For Blair's information, Galbraith once also said that there was "no hope for liberals if they seek only to imitate conservatives, and no function either."

He has known most of the British Prime Ministers since the Second World War, although not Margaret Thatcher, alas — what good spectator sport that encounter could have made. Thatcherites may not be surprised to learn that he is particularly fond of Sir Edward Heath. "Ted was here at Harvard the other day. He tends to become excited about the details of an argument, while I remain calmer."

He writes every day, rising early and working in his downstairs study with its photographs of presidents and statesmen he knew. There is one of Jackie Kennedy astride an elephant in India. "There is a plan for another book, which will describe his encounters with world leaders — 'an exercise in name-dropping'. He is bullish about the calibre of modern politicians. "In my lifetime there has been an enormous improvement in the quality of people in public life," he says. "One should not be in any doubt about that. People like Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, Warren G. Harding, they would be lost in the problems of today. In the war years I knew every member of Congress and the Senate. The Democrats were selected by the northern machines. Some of them were people whose party discipline depended on the fact that an indictment was always possible."

He was twice persuaded to think about running for the Senate, but it came to nothing. The first time he pulled out on the eve of the election because he realised that if he won it would have meant knocking out a black man from the House. The other time he was in mid-book and, having made the emotional investment, he felt he could not drop it. Could he have made it as an elected politician? "I have a certain surplus of energy, make speeches with ease and a minimum of thought," he says. "I would have had the patience for dealing with my constituents. Whether I would have had the patience for dealing with my colleagues is another matter."

Harvard in 1997 is a long call from the Berkeley of the Thirties. The status quo is now so soft-bellied that there is little for left-wing academics properly to protest about, and one of the dividends of the liberal advance has been the awful daily mugging of personal freedom, rife on Ivy League campuses, that is political correctness. Galbraith declined to see anything wrong with it. "On the whole I conform to the language of the moment," he says, suddenly strangely cold. "I do it without much thought." He was "not in the least bothered" by the possible curbs on free speech or thought. But then the eyes did their tortoise trick. "I adhere to the comment made in the *St Louis Dispatch* that one should comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

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Dark ages of the grand old party

Republicans fear capture by the Religious Right, says Tim Hames

It will be a peculiar celebration when Republican members of Congress gather in Washington today. For the first time since the 1920s, they have retained control of Capitol Hill. Thirty-two states, comprising nearly three-quarters of all Americans, have Republicans as their governors. A radical new system of public welfare, designed by conservatives, has replaced the model pioneered by Democratic Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson. Despite that, the atmosphere is subdued, even depressed. The architect of the great landslide of 1994 — Newt Gingrich — stands embattled by ethics charges, hanging on to his post as Speaker of the House by the skin of his teeth. The man who led the other side of that triumph — Robert Dole — now resides in the Florida sunshine, not the Senate or the White House.

To some, there is a crisis that goes much deeper. William Kristol, Editor of the leading conservative magazine, *The Weekly Standard*, complains that the Republicans no longer have a "compelling national agenda". Along with other conservative intellectuals, he spent the new

year faced by American liberalism, now that it has been abandoned even by a Democratic President. The Republicans' real dilemma is how to implement that programme so that it is uniquely associated with them, rather than see the spoils shared by the ever-opportunistic White House.

Most of the programme that energised both conservatives and the American public two years ago remains popular and is still waiting to be implemented. The proof of that lies in Bill Clinton's willingness to adopt almost all of its key aspects to ensure his re-election. In 1995, Republican attempts to pass a balanced-budget amendment to the American Constitution fell by one vote in the Senate. Thanks to the results in November, there is now the necessary two-thirds majority to enact it this year. In 1995, Dole and Gingrich forced President Clinton to offer more than \$100 billion in tax reductions, but turned this down as insufficient for their more zealous backbenchers in the House of Representatives. This year they should hold the President to his promise to cut taxes, but couple it with a radical drive to simplify the hideously complex, seven-million-word US tax system, along the lines of the flat tax that Steve Forbes vigorously promoted in the Republican primary contest.

Reagan's coalition could be recreated by tax cuts

The state of the economy may have helped Bill Clinton to keep the Oval Office despite all his other baggage, but economic policy — low taxation, small government, high growth — remains conservative-occupied territory. It is also the factor that glues the various elements of the Republican coalition together. Fundamentalists Christians are as hostile to Washington in their wallets as they are to "progressive" education in their schools. Furthermore, tax cuts can be designed to promote policy objectives, such as supporting family life, dear to the hearts of social conservatives.

Against the backdrop of a booming economy, and with a Democratic President favouring tax relief for the middle classes, the 15 per cent tax cut plan did not make much headway in 1996 — and Bob Dole was hardly a convincing advocate. All the evidence at state level is that those Republican governors who have successfully reduced tax and spending levels have reaped rich electoral rewards.

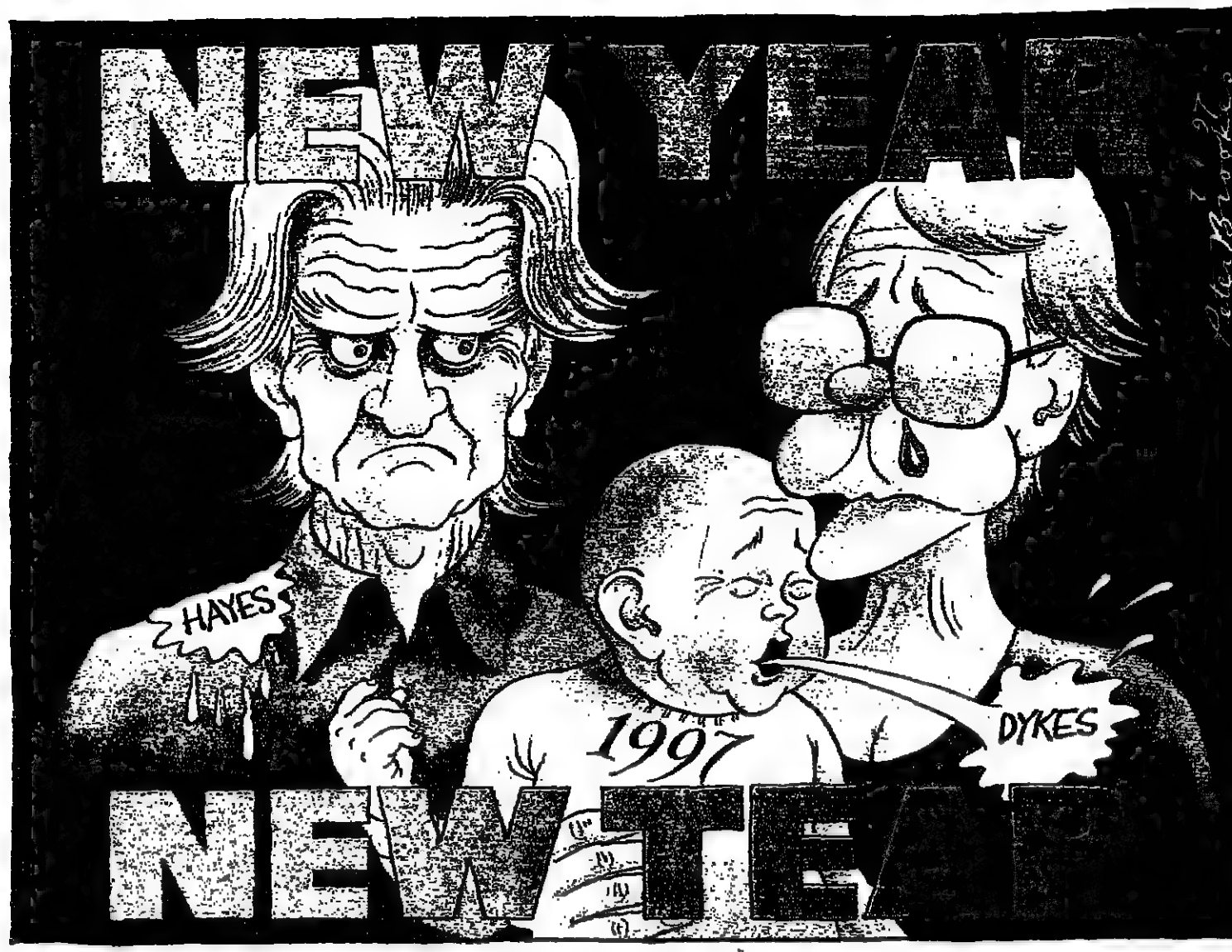
The worst mistake the Republicans could make during their present depression would be to abandon the principles of the Contract with America and seek instead some novel ideas simply because of one presidential defeat. To achieve their ambitious reforms in the next Congress, Republicans will require at least some co-operation from Bill Clinton. This will require compromise on detail and mean sharing the political credit. That may hurt the short-term feelings of American conservatives, but it will cause more long-term pain to American liberals.

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Yet despite the current fashion for despair in Washington, the death of the Republican Revolution and the demise of the Reagan coalition have been greatly exaggerated. The American Right does not lack a compelling national programme — or if it does, that problem pales into insignificance compared with those



The ads that detract

The message of the new Tory campaign is failure — but whose?

They look pretty sad. Young enough to have a baby but definitely past their prime: brown-lined, activated, mouths downturned, bad hair day visible behind the fat red print at brow level ("New Labour"). Above the lower level of print ("New Failure"), we see that Mr Miserable suffers from an Adam's apple so prominent as to cause suspicion of hyperthyroidism, and that Mrs Miserable is wearing an unseasonal bare-necked top. I feel cold just looking at it.

Both have the deep, dark hopeless eyes of baby seals about to be clubbed. The mother is weeping red ink. Brian Mawhinney thinks that the sight of this family will frighten us all into voting Conservative, on the principle that the electorate always keeps light hold of a nurse for fear of finding something worse.

This is the big one, the first campaign of election year. Thought and money and Saatchi magic have been poured into it with a lavishness born of desperation: the very models were made to sign written undertakings that they will not reveal their identities. It would never do for them to be photographed grinning, winking, kissing the cheek, or voting Lib Dem. The best that aficionados of political nonsense can hope for is that in years to come the infant, too young to sign, will turn up on *Midweek*, revealing that he was the 1997 Labour-failure baby.

I stared at them for a few moments, trying to be receptive to the message. Poor young couple: we are familiar with these faces: this look of grumpy black-and-white reportage despair. The word "failure" beneath them triggers instant associations. We see their small business going bust after years of struggle. They lost their house, bought at a high price during Nigel Lawson's fake boom: they owe the bank tens of thousands in negative equity. They will end up separated, in bed-and-breakfast hotels with no cooker, and the baby will grow up malnourished, with one of the old diseases now creeping back into Britain: TB or rickets.

Or they will be put on one of the worst council estates, where baby will become a drug-runner and — if he lives long enough — end up in one of Michael Howard's new secure units for 12-year-olds. In that fleeting first moment of seeing the poster we think "Poor dear! Victims of the recession, and now the recovery has come too

late because they will never catch up on their debts". All these notions chase through the mind immediately, because it is a good photograph expressing a familiar terror.

The only trouble is, Dr Mawhinney, that nobody automatically links all these things with Her Majesty's Opposition. If you are scrupulously fair-minded, you will associate the family's plight with plain bad luck. Far more probably, you will associate it with the fact that Britain has had 18 solid years of... Conservative government. The only personal grudge these people can possibly have against Labour is that back in the winter of discontent the power once went off when Slade were on *Top of the Pops*. As an example of shooting yourself accurately in the foot, this poster takes some beating.

There is a received idea that advertising rules the world: that such people as Steve Hilton, the Saatchi man who invented this ad, are brilliant manipulators who understand the public mind. This is particularly easy to believe when you are actually with advertising creatives, because they are such good company. They are boundlessly optimistic and confident, with the kind of simple fazing energy that magnetically attracts and comforts ordinary, hesitant, thoughtful people. They talk with a beguiling blend of pop psychology and hard-nosed machismo (as in "Let's nuke the opposition with a compassion offensive"). They make good jokes. They simplify things. It is easy to see why people from the real world, whose lives are enmeshed in necessary compromises and a million shades of grey, find solace in the company of adfolk.

They would do well, though, to use a longer spoon. This quick, clever, competitive profession hates to do anything straightforward ("Buy Soap — It Gets You Clean"). They want to be clever. And "clever" advertising, I submit, scores as many own goals as real ones. It is fun to look at, beautifully presented and zestful: but every

day millions of people look at these clever ads and think thoughts completely different from those intended. As the Arab proverb says, "The camel driver has his thoughts, and the camel he has his." Independently of the camel driver at the agency, we camels think "naïf" or "expensive" or "silly" or "I love that ad — which was it for, I never notice?" We watch shampoo advertisements and think "nice sweater", and coffee-bean commercials thinking "nice legs". Sometimes we are alienated, offended. To offer Gold Blend coffee to a male visitor is now equivalent to dropping a shoulder-strap and doing a *Bienvienda Buck* post. Chaste women do well to put it in a plain canister. Certain cars, mechanically excellent, are now so identified with spilt bimbos that men find them too embarrassing to drive. My husband confides that he could never bring himself to drive "anything that Ruby Wax might have been in". Even the most technically brilliant advertisements backfire: I like the occasional half-pint of Guinness, but can no longer order it in an English pub because of a painful sense that these days it is only drunk by appalling posers in black polo-neckers.

You might say that these are targeted campaigns, so it does not matter if they annoy those outside the target area: but this is hardly a safe way for politicians to think. They need everyone, of every age and type. The cleverest ad, the greater its potential to look silly and annoying, and in an election year, being gratuitously silly and annoying is not wise. Sometimes the opposite happens, and a negative image is strangely attractive. In *Black Mischief*, Evelyn Waugh caricatured this effect when a population-control campaign showed two pictures: a small family with healthy children and the wife reading the newspaper, versus a huge tribe of skinned and mentally deformed infants led by a bowed, struggling mother. In the story, the locals condemn the first picture and aspire

to identify with the second family: hard-working woman, very fertile, plenty of progeny, one "very mad, very holy".

The modern equivalent of this was the 1980s government scare campaign showing a thin, haggard, scruffy figure warning that "Heroin screws you up". A glance at some CD covers could have told the perpetrators that thin, haggard, scruffy and tragic was a very fashionable way for teenagers to look. This season's drink-driving campaign shows a composed girl, a bit scared but nonetheless interesting-looking, talking about her averagely equivocal relationship with the boyfriend who crashed the car. "They're still together," say the onlookers, swigging their sloppos with gusto. "Isn't that nice? And can't they do tremendous things with plastic surgery these days?"

Or take the "demon eyes" poster. I have to tell you that some of us girls thought Mr Blair looked very attractive. In a Heathcliffian sort of way, without his Bamby eyes. And at least one floating male voter said that it made him more able to believe that this Labour PM really would be capable of getting tough with unions and left-wingers. To be fair, Labour made exactly the same mistake when it portrayed Norman Lamont looking rather fabulous as *Veznan*, its agency obviously forgot that *Batman* is a goodie, a superhero. But Labour has learnt its lesson, and is now very sensibly lying low and allowing puerile Tory advertising to do the job of making its leaders look statesmanlike, restrained and even sexy.

How many more months of this? After "New Labour — New Danger", we now have "New Labour — New Failure". What next? Perhaps "New Labour — New Neighbour" (picture of savage lesbian in leathers with hammer-and-sickle on helmet). Then "New Labour — New Manager" (with a dog in it, obviously, labelled "Adoption social worker"). If it runs on till May we shall be down to "New Labour — New Puncture", with Mr and Mrs Miserable Sesi-Eyes struggling to change a wheel (marked "Social Chapter") on the broken-down national car while the rest of the world roars past in the fast lane.

All of these images, naturally, will combine to give the electorate the impression that the Labour Party is rather fun and highly electable. Or at least less silly, prodigal and desperate than some.

Libby Purves

A Lib-Lab pact may sink Blair

Voters don't like coalitions, says Woodrow Wyatt

By November 1961, the Tories had held office for 12 years. The Profumo affair and Harold Macmillan's retirement through illness were yet to come. Confidence that Labour would win the election due in 1964 was not strong. In 1959, under Hugh Gaitskell, we in the Labour Party had fought a better campaign than our opponents but were defeated by the fear that Labour would damage the economy. As the joint Liberal and Labour vote had exceeded that of the Tories, I proposed that there should be a Lib-Lab pact in seats where the Tories had won with a minority of votes. Labour would run no candidate where the Liberals had come second, and vice versa.

A poll on November 27, 1961 showed that 56 per cent of Labour supporters agreed with me, and only 27 per cent disagreed, and 40.5 per cent of Liberal supporters approved. But Gaitskell, strongly disliked my proposal. Angry, he told me I had acutely embarrassed him by airing it. This was because we were known to be close associates and it was often assumed that I was expressing his views. Nevertheless, I persisted, publishing a very long article in the *New Statesman* of January 26, 1962, containing tables showing how the scheme would work. If the local Labour and Liberal parties arranged to back the candidate with the best chance, there ought to be a Lib-Lab majority in the Commons. Jo Grimond, the Liberal leader, was convinced of the scheme's merits, but Gaitskell and the Labour national executive were further enraged. Morgan Phillips, the Labour Party's general secretary, was instructed to write to tell me that I must drop my advocacy of a Lib-Lab pact or be expelled. So I dropped it.

Many people prominent in the Labour Party today probably feel the same way about the current discussions between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. The fact that they are taking place shows Tony Blair's lack of confidence in Labour being able to form a government on its own. The Callaghan Government could not have survived so long without its pact with the Liberals. I understand Mr Blair's reasoning. He suspects that despite his big lead in the opinion polls, he too will be unable to sustain a government without Liberal backing, and he wants to settle the terms in advance. Mr Blair would regard his not becoming prime minister this year as a personal catharsis.

Yesterday Paddy Ashdown said on the BBC's *Today* programme he would not rule out his becoming a member of a Blair Cabinet. Of course not. That would be his first demand, with one or two other Liberal Democrats to join him. Presumably he would also insist on his pet scheme for increased income tax devoted entirely to education, which would make a hole in Mr Blair's claim that Labour would not raise taxes. But the biggest liability Mr Blair risks taking on is the Liberal Democrats' attitude to Europe. Mr Ashdown vehemently maintains that the Westminster Parliament must inevitably become increasingly subordinate to European institutions. Not only does he wish to be part of the single currency, but he is a passionate federalist as well. You know a man by the company he keeps, and Mr Blair keeps close company with Mr Ashdown, to the extent even of co-ordinating their attacks on John Major. Mr Blair's declaration that he would fight for British interests in Europe is hollow, since it is coupled with his determination to agree with the majority rather than be isolated, as Mr Major is prepared to be.

Hugh Gaitskell used to say that people voted Liberal only because they were too snobbish to vote Labour. Clearly Mr Blair has persuaded Mr Ashdown that it is now more snobbish to convert with Labour, led by a product of Eton and Oxford, than with Mr Major, who left school at 16 and understands poverty from his own experience. Blair has worked the theme that because he is an admirer of Margaret Thatcher, there is not much difference between voting for the Conservatives and voting for new Labour. But joining with the Liberal Democrats is an electoral mistake.

Much has changed since 1962, when I advocated such an alliance. Basically this is a two-party country which prefers one-party government, strong enough to make essential difficult decisions, to potentially weak coalitions. The prospect of proportional representation, which comes closer with the partnership of Blair and Ashdown, is more likely to lose votes than to gain them — as is their shared addiction to overturning institutions for no real benefit. The proposed separate assembly for Scotland, with tax-raising powers, would inevitably lead to disputes between Westminster and Edinburgh, eventually fuelling a Scottish demand for complete independence and the break-up of the United Kingdom. Under Blair and Ashdown, this issue would be decided solely by the Scots, ignoring the English, Welsh and Northern Irish, who form the overwhelming majority of British people. The excess baggage with which Mr Blair has burdened himself lessens his chances of winning the election, and it is now too late for him to shed it.

Piped music

MUSICAL rarities from 50 years' worth of classical and rock archives have been ruined in a flood caused by burst pipes at the British Academy of Song Writers and Composers in London, the largest composer trade association.

Handwritten correspondence from Noel Coward is now smudged, soggy and illegible; his letter accepting the presidency of the academy is believed to be beyond repair. A Mapplethorpe print of

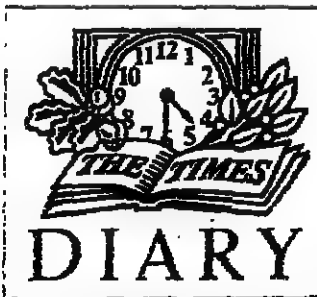
the singer Peter Gabriel looks like a half-faded poppydum.

"What we need is some remedial angel," said Amanda Harcourt, rock archivist, yesterday. "We're wading through water here to get to our desks. The lights and electricity don't work, the computers are sodden and cracks are appearing all over the building."

Photographs of Paul and Linda McCartney with Liza Minnelli, of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, and of Yehudi Menuhin cavorting with the Bee Gees are feared lost, along with Lennon's original academy membership certificate.

But of more pressing concern are the entry tapes for the Song for Europe competition, arriving in every post in time for Terry Wogan's patter at the final in March. "The Nucleo nominations will be arriving soon as well," said Harcourt, "and we're wading around in galushes with nowhere to put them."

● A smear of tubed journalists hurried off to France yesterday in search of the feverish MP Jerry Hayes, who was rumoured to be staying with his family at Disneyland, Paris. Never short of inspira-



tion where a grubby story is concerned, they set about trying to lure Mickey Mouse, and Donald Duck, to the Times. Back in London, sub-editors were desperate to combine the story about Jerry Hayes with the one about Jerry MP Hugh Dole, who was talking to the Lib Dems and to Labour. They all wanted to use the headline "Gays and Dykes".

Read Nigel's

PEERING waistwards after Christmas, Norman Lamont has decided to diet. He has chosen the Hay Diet, which basically involves not mixing meat and potatoes. "I don't believe it will work," says Lamont, who claims that he still fits snugly into his suits. "But I read all these diet things in the newspaper, and thought I might

buy a book and try one out." Lamont, who will be standing for the Tories in Harrogate at the election, denies putting on weight recently, despite not being the sort to fold his napkin when the puddings come round. "I put on my weight when I was younger," he says, "and since then, it has been pretty stable. It only really adjusts according to elections."

Dare we?

BBC NEWS programmes were characteristically wet on Sunday about the Jerry Hayes affair. Not since the Conservative MP Ste-



phen Milligan died after indulging in a sexual experiment has there been so much hand-wringing over what to tell viewers and listeners. In the case of Milligan, it was 18 hours after the story of his death broke before the BBC felt able to divulge that he had been found naked but for women's underwear.

The story of Hayes's platonic affair with a gay teenager was touched upon briefly in morning bulletins, and raised in David Frost's breakfast interview with John Major, but disappeared altogether later in the day. "It was a potentially defamatory story," says the BBC by way of explanation. "And we didn't feel we could carry it on any further. So it was decided the story wasn't really strong enough for the main bulletins."

Cashing in

AFTER 30 years out in the cold, the prep-school nameplate manufacturer J & J Cash Ltd. has again received a Royal Warrant of Appointment. The company lost the Queen's Royal Warrant in 1964 when Prince Charles was 15 and Princess Anne was 13. A surfeit of nameplates had accumulated at Buckingham Palace, and they could in any case be folded over and recycled for Princes Andrew and Edward. J & J Cash lost



Young royalty: taped

business from the Windsors. A new generation of young royals has secured a warrant from the Prince of Wales, however. Princes William and Harry and Princess Beatrice have created the demand. Princess Eugenie is sure to follow on. The company is delighted and Bill Cash, MP, whose forebears started the company, applauds the warrant: "A marvellous tribute not only to Cash's nameplates but also to the numb sewing fingers of mothers up and down the land."

P.H.S.



Coward: soggy



IT STARTED IN TEARS

Why Dr Mawhinney should be negative and proud of it

New Year, new opportunity, new launch and new embarrassments arrived for the Conservative Party this week. Just as Tory posters appeared on the streets showing an unfortunate couple bawling their decision to vote Labour, another mother and father — Mr and Mrs Jerry Hayes — went to ground to escape embarrassing press revelations. Then there surfaced the unlikely partnership of Hugh Dykes and Jack Straw, taking further shine off the party's much-needed and crisply planned advertising.

Dr Mawhinney did not well serve his own cause when he was accused on the *Today* programme of negative campaigning. Instead of saying that he had a justifiably negative view of the Labour Party and wished to communicate this to the British people, he said that his advertisement was a "very positive message". This sort of duplicity is unnecessary and unsustainable.

The central Tory strategy, however slim its prospects, has to remain where it has been for more than a year: its reliance is on economic recovery and a claim that Labour will ruin it. The second part of that strategy requires an inevitably negative message. Negative advertising is also the most proven method of appealing to floating voters. To insist on avoiding the N-word only infuriates voters, who are already inclined to see Conservative politicians as untrustworthy. Nor did the Prime Minister assist the re-launch. He chose his hour-long platform of an interview with David Frost to say little.

Instead, therefore, front benchers have been making the news, and those who want to cause maximum damage to the Conservative Party have chosen their timing well. Max Clifford, the publicist representing Mr Hayes's alleged boyfriend, waited

until the Prime Minister revisited family values before revealing what they might sometimes mean in practice. Mr Straw, having conducted a long and tortuous courtship with Mr Dykes, chose the first working week of the New Year to announce that the Tory MP, far from thinking constitutional reform dangerous, would become actively involved with Labour and the Liberal Democrats in its design.

The trouble with trying to present politics in black and white — as election campaigns invariably do — is that grey will insist on blurring the edges. The arguments about constitutional reform do not create straight partisan divisions. Many Conservatives, not least the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor, have been in favour of devolution in the past. Some Tories privately support electoral reform; others would like to see incorporation into domestic law of the European Convention on Human Rights. Mr Major may see electoral advantage in portraying Labour as the party of constitutional wreckers, but he must also face the fact that many of the Opposition's proposals have been espoused on his own benches, sometimes even in Tory manifestos.

With a non-existent majority, Mr Major is more beholden than ever to his backbenchers. Looking ahead to five months of compulsory Commons attendance culminating in probable defeat at the polls, those MPs are likely to be more fractious than ever. The Ulster Unionists will probably ensure that no vote of confidence is lost between now and May; but the Government's dependence on a minority party, living from day to day, will sap morale. The New Year has begun, but there is little sign yet of a new spirit abroad.

FORWARD IN BELGRADE

Serbia seeks redemption in witty, brave and peaceful protest

Today, the Orthodox Christmas is celebrated — and nowhere more sanguinely than in Belgrade, where tens of thousands of protesting citizens flocked last night to St Sava's Cathedral for a midnight Mass held in decidedly unorthodox circumstances. As they prepared for their 51st straight day of outcrying and outlasting the regime of Slobodan Milosevic, they feel the odds shifting in their favour.

Not only has the battle for democracy in Serbia outgrown its original cause, President Milosevic's refusal to accept Opposition victories in a string of municipal elections; it is at last attracting support from within the hierarchy, which Mr Milosevic cannot so easily pretend to ignore as he has the daily street carnival of crowds equipped with little more than eggs, detergent, snowballs and the cacophony of thousands of whistles, alarm clocks and beaten pans.

Mr Milosevic still appears in firm control of the levers on which he has traditionally relied most closely, the mass media, which is key to retaining the support of rural Serbs, an 80,000-strong cohort of heavily armed paramilitary police whose loyalty he has taken care to purchase, and a manipulable legal system. But to many Serbs, the Church and the Army embody their sense of nationhood far more surely than the apparatus inherited from communism. His grip on both of these is slipping.

The first serious crack came last week when the ruling council of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which notoriously supported Mr Milosevic's drive to carve out a Greater Serbia, turned on him with a blistering public attack for "strangling political and religious freedoms" and "bringing bloodshed" by setting Serb against Serb. It ineffectually demanded the reinstatement of the local election results. The Church can reach where opposition media cannot, and because many country people have remained religious throughout

the communist years, once this message reaches rural pulpits Mr Milosevic's strategy of confining protest to the urban middle classes will be seriously weakened.

Now the Army is edging off the fence. While pointedly refraining from any statement of support for the President, it has so far insisted on its constitutional duty to stay clear of politics. But yesterday General Momcilo Perisic, the Army Chief of Staff, told a student delegation that the Army expected the crisis to be resolved "in the manner employed in democratic countries". For Mr Milosevic, the grave implication is that if he sets on the demonstrators with tanks, as he did in 1991, he will have to call on his special police. Faced by a potential army revolt, they too might hesitate to shoot. For the first time in nine years, Mr Milosevic appears on shakier ground than his opponents.

If he exercised one of the tactical retreats of which he is master, he might yet cling to power. If he reversed the local election fraud, as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe has demanded, his power would be denied but not destroyed. He would then have nearly a year to plot his strategy for the federal presidential and parliamentary elections.

This is the course the West is pressing on him. There is gain if pressure succeeds, because the cracks in the monolith will widen. But there is gain, too, if it does not. The more he acts as though the removal of a single small brick would bring his house down, the more likely he makes its collapse. By their wit, courage and peaceable conduct, Serbia's students and burghers have shown their determination to effect bloodless reform. They have done much to rebuild Serbia's tarnished reputation; if they win through, it would have a redeeming influence on the intolerant politics of the Balkans. For all these reasons, they deserve moral and political support.

CLASSIC PRIGGERY

Music has room for epigram and epitome as well as epic

The new "crossover" chart for recorded music announced yesterday will provide a separate league table for Dame Kiri Te Kanawa singing Rodgers and Hammerstein, Pavarotti performing with Elton John, and others who sway between recording classical and pop music. At present the mass popularity of such compilations dominates the classical charts and squeezes out the thoroughbred recordings that are new. The crossover chart will enable enterprising music companies to claim the distinction of having issued the most popular opera album, tape or compact disc in history. It will also annoy purists and prigs.

We will hear the familiar complaint that those who cannot take a work of art whole and pure should not nibble at its edges. Such was the opinion of Claudio Abbado when he threatened to sue Deutsche Grammophon for concentrating highlights from the many Mahler symphonies he has conducted on a single compact disc. But his opinion dismayed weaker brothers and sisters who find that a little Mahler goes a long way. Abbado was repeating the cry of intellectual snobs down the ages: a little learning, or culture, is a dangerous thing.

This rhetoric is not just snobbish. It is also unhistorical. Children and beginners in any new field usually start with digests, whether *The Golden Treasury*, *Other Men's Flowers*, *The Greek Anthology*, poems on the Underground, or some modern compilation.

Only dogged enthusiasts would insist that everybody study every word of the Bible (or *Living*) or enjoy every note of Wagner.

Vast swathes of what we call culture has been passed to us in selected soundbites. Much of our classical heritage was preserved by the epitomists of the Hellenistic age. They were the first to feel the growth of recorded literature as a burden. Those old bookmen of Alexandria denounced the "big evil of a big book" and pioneered both small works and the abridgement of long ones. The three-volume novel was a reinvention of the Romantic giants. But even Victorian novelists wrote in short episodes for popular serialisation. In his preface to *The Wings of the Dove*, even Henry James regretted that his publisher had failed to sell serialisation rights: "Sour grapes may at moments fairly intoxicate." And James was not a novelist to short-change readers.

Musicians too have always wanted to make the most of their music, recycling it for all audiences. A hundred best tunes in some form is one of the oldest radio programmes. Henry Wood's first Promenade Concerts consisted of 20 extracts from operas warbled by the divas of the day. The proper criticism of Classic FM is not the brevity of its extracts but the long-windedness of its presenters. Music and culture have many mansions. And there is room in them for the 100 best arias as well as for Bayreuth, and even yet another perfect recording of *La Bohème*.

Police statistics on drink-driving

From Mr J. G. Wishart

Sir, On January 3 you reported that, according to the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo), the number of drivers in England and Wales caught drinking and driving over the Christmas period rose by 18 per cent compared with the same period in 1995. What was not stated was the number of all drivers tested. Without this fact, the 18 per cent figure has no validity.

West Mercia Police reported a 35 per cent rise in positive tests. So what? How many sober drivers were tested? Such a presentation of data is meaningless.

The significant fact is that Merseyside Police tested 11,160 drivers and caught 97 (0.87 per cent) — an improvement over 1995, when about 3,700 were tested to catch 135 (3.65 per cent). This is a sensible way to present statistical data.

One week ago, police in Scotland published their Christmas drink-driving results and claimed that the failure rate was "unbelievable" because 69 drivers failed the breath test, an increase of 39 over the same period in 1995. This was widely bemoaned in the media. Yet the final figures show that 164 per cent of tested drivers failed in 1995 and that in 1996 the proportion of a greatly increased number of tested drivers fell to 1.38 per cent. This reduction in percentage was ignored and the larger number of failures condemned.

It is interesting to note that most police forces in England and Wales refused to release data relating to the total number of tests undertaken. Why is this? Are the true percentages falling but numbers of failures increasing because of increasingly larger numbers of drivers tested? Do the police have a hidden agenda and are they attempting to persuade us with suspect data that the present legal limit should be reduced?

May we please have statistical data presented in a proper manner.

Yours faithfully,
J. G. WISHART,
Milton House,
Milton of Balgonie, Glenrothes, Fife,
January 6.

From Professor K. T. V. Gratton

Sir, Whilst you correctly note that the total number of drivers caught drinking and driving is up (by 18 per cent), the underlying figures point, I believe, to two more significant things.

The first is the essential similarity of the failure rate figures in Scotland and Merseyside. These are areas where the largest and the most statistically meaningful numbers of tests were performed. At about 1 per cent, the failure rate was in each case better or, at worst, similar to last year's.

The second is that this implies a pass rate of 99 per cent, in spite of the huge number of motorists inconvenienced by the process in these two areas alone.

Do these figures really justify the need for the "unlettered" powers to stop and test drivers, called for by police chiefs and reported by you, given this clear indication that random testing is, in effect, already with us?

Yours faithfully,
K. T. V. GRATTON
City University,
School of Engineering,
Northampton Square, ECI.

From HM Coroner,
South Yorkshire (East)

Sir, There is no significant difference between the number of fatal road accidents involving motorists with a blood/alcohol level of 80mg per 100ml or more and those with a level of 50mg per 100ml or more. People are not alerted by less than 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

People are affected, sometimes for life, by being "breathalysed", and by consequent disqualification from driving and, not infrequently, employment. Rightly or wrongly, but understandably, such people and their families and friends blame the police for having applied the law by breathalysing them, and I fear that a reduction in the legal limit, and the consequent increase in convictions of motorists, will considerably reduce public goodwill towards the police.

The present law works well. Acpo should realise that any reduction in the present blood/alcohol limit may bring about far more indirect disadvantage than benefit.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY HOOPER,
HM Coroner,
South Yorkshire (East),
Coroner's Court and Office,
5 Union Street,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

Press and politics

From Sir Julian Critchley, MP for Aldershot (Conservative)

Sir, Whether or not Jerry Hayes has had a "relationship" with Paul Stone is of little importance. What is really sickening is the import of this sentence carried in your lead story today: "Mr Stone, now 24, is understood to have received £75,000 for selling his claim to the *News of the World* through the publicist Max Clifford".

If true, what does it tell us of the British press, Mr Stone and, of course, the egregious Mr Clifford?

Yours etc,
JULIAN CRITCHLEY,
House of Commons,
January 6.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Adoption needs and the scapegoating of social workers

From the General Secretary of the Cuckoo Child Welfare Council

Sir, Paul Barker article, "Finding homes for our lost children", December 30, set also letters, January 1) highlighted well some of the misguided and counterproductive views about placing black and mixed-race children in adoptive and foster families.

The 1989 Children Act requires local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to have regard to religion, race, language and culture when coming to a decision on placement of a child. In practice it can be almost impossible to balance these and other needs, and sometimes "race" has been given an unreasonable priority or a biased interpretation.

However, social workers and adoption panels, in both the statutory and voluntary sectors, are always trying to make decisions which are in the best interests of the child. Indeed the obligation to make the child's interests paramount is the cornerstone of the Children Act: one reason that new adoption legislation is needed is to bring it in line with that Act.

Yours faithfully,
MARY GANDY,
General Secretary,
Cuckoo Child Welfare Council,
120 West Heath Road, NW3,
January 1.

From the Director of the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering

Sir, It was refreshing to read Professor Triselioti's spirited defence (letter, January 1) of British social workers, whose work is accorded greater respect almost everywhere in the world except in their own country.

Our social workers have the unenviable task of balancing the need to protect children against maintaining their right to remain with their own families. Few would thank the State for arranging for children to be permanently removed from their birth parents for adoption because of a failure to provide the resources and sup-

port which would allow them to return to their families.

Indeed the 1989 Children Act requires social workers to work in partnership with parents. For this to work, trust is essential, and a new emphasis on adoption for children in care risks deterring those parents who desperately need help from approaching social workers for fear of permanently losing their children.

Far fewer children now live in children's homes. Over 65 per cent are now placed with foster parents, compared with less than 50 per cent ten years ago. However, for some young people, good quality residential care provides a much needed breathing space after painful rejection, which happens in adoptive homes as well as in foster and birth families, before they are able to risk again the intensity of family life.

Increased demands on social workers together with annual real cuts in funding make the allocation of resources to more adoption work problematic. It is true that too many children still wait too long, but improvements could be achieved without major structural changes. The single most important factor would be to bring forward the Adoption Bill.

Yours sincerely,
FELICITY COLLIER,
Director,
British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering,
Skyline House,
200 Union Street, SE1,
January 2.

From the Senior Director of Barnardo's

Sir, Whilst there is much to debate in Paul Barker's colour-blind adoption policy, his condemnation of the majority of those who work in children's homes as an "odd bunch" with suspect motives operating a "moral cesspit" requires some justification.

Most contemporary children's homes engage people of skill, imagination and persistence, often working

successfully alongside difficult and damaged young people with whom no one else wants to be bothered. Their hours of work are unpopular, their job satisfactions erratic and their pay modest.

There are relatively few children's homes these days, and Barnardo's is as active as any in ensuring that children have families. But good quality residential care will always be essential and the staff who work in it deserve better than Mr Barker's ill-informed comments.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER SINGLETON,
Senior Director,
Barnardo's,
Tanners Lane,
Barkingside, Ilford, Essex,
December 31.

From Mr Rob Davis

Sir, I am an adoptive father of two teenagers who have both been through the children's home system, moving on like moths when the next social worker decided on yet another "placement". Adolescents like these are awkward enough for a "natural" family to deal with at times but doubly so when they carry into that family the baggage of insecurity, low self-esteem and probably no warm bonds with anyone at all.

Once adopted, all help for these children disappears. We who willingly give homes to older children do not require thanks but an acknowledgment that much more needs to be done to counsel, educate and support our families through those periods when every fibre of love and patience is stretched to the limit.

Helping damaged children find themselves in an adoptive family requires first-class resources from committed social workers.

Yours faithfully,
R. G. DAVIS,
Cwmbran,
Llanfairwaterddyn, Knighton, Powys,
December 31.

Nurses' training and patient care

From Mr P. J. Mahaffey, FRCS

Sir, Dr Betty Kershaw, President of the Royal College of Nursing, appears to me desperate to defend the claimed improvements to nursing which the current nurse training scheme, Project 2000, is said to have brought about (letters, December 31).

If she is so keen to drag nursing away from its natural base as a caring, instinctive profession towards one based on science, then let her give scientific evidence that current nurse graduates make better nurses in the sense that we all expect when lying ill in bed. She cannot, because in my view there is none.

On the contrary, ask any long-serving hospital consultant such as myself, or any ward-based nurse senior enough to have a proper perspective, whether nursing is better now than it was before Project 2000. I suggest that the unanimous response will judge that it is infinitely the poorer.

Yours faithfully,
PETER MAHAFFEY
(Plastic and reconstructive surgeon),
Lister Hospital,
Corcoran Mill Lane,
Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

From Mrs M. A. Leary, RGN, SCM

Sir, Nigella Lawson (article, December 26) talked sound common sense. I

Buffalo market

From Mr John Raybould

Sir, Let's hope that no underemployed, disgruntled official in Brussels notices your intriguing report, "Buffalo room on English fields" (January 2), in which Mr Bob Palmer, a Warwickshire farmer, says that "The great attraction of [water] buffalo is that they are not covered by the European Union's quota system" (unlike the Jersey cows he previously owned).

Any Eurocrat now tempted to "maximise his bureau" by extending the EU's regulatory arm to reach buffalo in the UK might do well to remember the maxim "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Rather, we should all congratulate Mr and Mrs Palmer for their entrepreneurship that has apparently produced a prize-winning cheese from their buffalo milk.

Cooking a snook at Brussels's common agricultural policy, Mr Palmer adds: "The only limits on how much milk you can produce are the capacity of your cows and the number of customers willing to buy it." Adam Smith himself could not have described the essence of the market economy more succinctly.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN RAYBOULD,
3 Chestnut Court,
High Street, Newport,
Saffron Walden, Essex,
January 2.

World peace

From Sir Timothy Garden,
Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs

Sir, It was good to be reminded by Simon Jenkins ("At long last, peace in our time", January 1) that we all have much to be thankful for in the recent decline in "hot wars" between states.

He cast himself as the optimist railing against traditional institutional pessimism. Yet his conclusion, that he is prepared to pay the price "if an occasional civil war is the price of world peace", is itself a counsel of despair.

The international community must continue to look for ways to reduce conflict, and to increase the sum of human happiness. Institutions have a very positive role to play in this task by examining potential future problems and providing timely solutions.

Yours faithfully,
TIM GARDEN,
Director, The Royal Institute of International Affairs,
Chatham House,
10 St James's Square, SW1.

By any other name

From Mr Graham Ralph

Sir, I feel I should correct the common misapprehension that the student union building at Manchester Metropolitan University (formerly Manchester Polytechnic) was named after Nelson Mandela (report, January 6). The building's full title during the ANC Year of the Woman in 1984 was in fact the "Winnie Mandela Building".

There were moves to drop the name in 1990 when Winnie Mandela's reputation began to suffer. I believe we were one of only two student unions to have "honoured" Mrs Mandela in this way.

There is also no truth in the rumour that the student union building was renamed after Bruce Forsyth because it had a thatched roof.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM RALPH
(President, Manchester Polytechnic Students Union, 1988-89),
29 Alfred Road, Gravesend, Kent,
January 6.

Better luck next time

From Professor Emeritus Brian G. Palmer

Sir, The man behind me at the newsagent's seemed in a hurry to pay for his paper so I politely let him go ahead of me. In fact he also bought an instant lottery ticket of the sort I was about to buy. While I was paying for my purchases he stood busily scratching his card. Joyfully he announced that he had won £200 — and my ticket proved to be a loser.

Manners clearly makyth Man — poorer by £200.

Yours faithfully,
B. G. PALMER,
10 Stevens Lane, Peppard Common,
Henley-on-Thames, Surrey,
January 3.

Time is money

From Mr Mark Bone

Sir, The enormous estimates being quoted regarding the cost of reprogramming computer date systems before December 31, 1999, (report, Business News, December 30), the so-called "millennium time bomb", have alerted me to a problem facing this business.

Our rubber date stamps expire on December 31, 1998.

Yours faithfully,
MARK BONE,
The Swan Bookshop,
12 Church Road,
Teddington, Middlesex,
January 3.

Warm work

From Mr D. E. Thomas

Sir, You report today (early editions) that Harriet Harman is proposing to fund an army of young workers to insulate the homes of pensioners.

Call me a traditionalist, but I think rolls of glass fibre or boards of polystyrene would be more acceptable to pensioners.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK THOMAS,
4 Croft Close, Rowton, Chester,
January 3.

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Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM, NORFOLK

January 6: Today being the Feast of the Epiphany, a Sung Eucharist was held in the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, when the customary offerings of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh were made on behalf of The Queen by Major Nigel Chamberlayne-Macdonald and Air Vice-Marshal Barry Newton (Gentlemen Ushers to Her Majesty).

The Bishop of London (Dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal) was the Celebrant and presented the Offerings, assisted by the Reverend William Booth (Sub-Dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal) and the Reverend Stephen Young (Priest in Ordinary).

Today's royal engagement

The Princess Royal will attend The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association annual awards dinner at the Churchill Inter-Continental, 30 Portman Square, London, W1, at 7.45.

Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie

A Thanksgiving Service for the life of Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie will be held on Saturday, February 8, 1997, at 11.30am in Guildford Cathedral. Anyone who knew him is welcome.



Tony Elliott, founder, Time Out Group, is 50

The Latymer Foundation at Hammersmith

Following the announcement of the retirement of Mrs Joan Chandler, BA, the Governors of The Latymer Foundation at Hammersmith are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr David Plummer, BA (Hons), Dip HE, to be Principal of The Latymer Preparatory School from September 1997.

Dinner

The Altheim Mr Geoffrey Perry was the speaker at a talk dinner held last night at the Altheim, Mr Jonathan Ball was in the chair.

Appointments

Mrs Honor Chapman has been appointed a Crown Estate Commissioner in succession to Mr Richard Chas who retired on 31 December 1996. Mr Ramsey has been reappointed a Commissioner.

Mrs Susan Raskin has been appointed a District Judge on the Western Circuit.

Birthdays today

Mr Richard Armstrong, conductor, 54; Dr Tim Black, chief executive, Global Family Planning Charity, 60; Her Honour Hazel Cunniff, 60; Mr Hunter Davies, author and broadcaster, 60; Sir Peter Graham, QC, 63; Mr Stuart Hampton, chairman, John Lewis Partnership, 50; the Right Rev William Herbert, Bishop of St Albans, 53; Mr Ian La Frenais, screenwriter and producer, 60; Mr Ross Norman, squash champion, 58.

The Viscount of Oxford, 63; Sir John Page, former chairman, National Ports Council, 82; Lady (Kenneth) Scott, former chairwoman, Volunteer Centre UK, 65; Professor K.W. Sykes, chemist, 70; Air Commodore the Hon Sir Peter Vaneck, former Lord Mayor of London, 75; Mr Will Wyatt, chief executive, BBC Network Television, 55; Mr Roger D. Young, Director-General, Institute of Management, 57.

Retirement

Judge Allardice retired yesterday from the Midland and Oxford Circuit bench.

Mr R.P. Halstead and Miss L.J. Howard

The engagement is announced between Richard, elder son of Sir Ronald Halstead and the late Mrs Yvonne Halstead, of Kensington, London, and stepson of Mrs Sue Stosell, of Chislehurst, London, and Lullie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Howard, of Richmond, Surrey.

Mr A.R. Beresford Campbell and Miss Z.A. MacLeod The engagement is announced between Alexander Robert, only son of Mr and Mrs Colin R. Beresford Campbell, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and Zoe Alexandra, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Rory MacLeod, of South Chertsey, Surrey.

Mr J.F.R. Birkin and Miss P.A.G. Moon The engagement is announced between James, son of the late Air Commodore J.M. Birkin and Mrs C.J. Cole, of Hawkhurst, Devon, and Philippa, daughter of Major and Mrs John Moon, of Corbridge, Northumberland.

Mr T.R. Burgess and Miss E.C. Mollard The engagement is announced between Tim, eldest son of Mr Ian Burgess, of Alton, Hampshire, and Mrs E.C. Mollard, of Boxgrove, West Sussex, and Kirstie, eldest daughter of the late Mr Nicholas Burgess and Mrs Kate Byrne, of West Wittering, West Sussex.

Mr R.M. Fennes Cox and Miss D. Krohn The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Fennes Cox, of Church Crookham, Hampshire, and Daniela, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Hans Krohn, of Shaw, Newbury, Berkshire.

Mr R.W. Gordon and Miss C.B.A. Gibbs The engagement is announced between Robert William, younger son of Mr and Mrs W.G. Gordon, of Lude, Blair Atholl, and Camilla, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jeremy Gibbs, of Upper Kennards, Leigh, Kent.

Mr M.D. Kinnane and Miss T.N. Watson The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr and Mrs M.D. Kinnane, of Woking, Surrey, and Tracy (Tessa), elder daughter of Mr Stuart Watson, of Wellingham, Lincolnshire, and Mrs Graham Kelly, of Brussels, Belgium.

Mr F.J. Kucera and Miss S.J. Mellor The engagement is announced between Francis, only son of the late Dr Miroslav Kucera and of Mrs Jenny Kucera, of Reigate, Surrey, and Sarah, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Mellor, of Stockmore, West Yorkshire.

Mr R. Prialuk and Miss J.C. Hebblethwaite The engagement is announced between Roger, son of Mr and Mrs Le-Roy Prialuk, of Rimpington, Somerset, and Sarah, daughter of Dr and Mrs Rodney Hebblethwaite, of Broadmayne, Dorset.

Mr N.A.L. Chubb and Miss E.L.R. Coleman

The engagement is announced between Nathan, younger son of Mr and Mrs Anthony Chubb, of Ripley, Dorset, and Elena, younger daughter of Bishop Peter Coleman and Princess Donata, Mrs Peter Coleman, of West Bagborough, Somerset.

Mr M.J.H. Colquhoun and Miss K.R. Woodrow The engagement is announced between Mark Humphrey, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Colquhoun, of Gloucestershire, and Katherine Rosemary, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs James Woodrow, of Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

Mr N.M. McLaure and Miss K.E.M. Townsend The engagement is announced between Neil, son of Mr and Mrs Maurice McLaure, of Wigan, Lancashire, and Kim, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs John Townsend, of Maidenhead, Berkshire.

Mr J.J. Pearce and Miss E.C. Mollard The engagement is announced between Ivan, son of Mr James Pearce, of Redlynch, Wiltshire, and Mrs Josephine Pettman, of Pennington, Hampshire, and Emma, younger daughter of Dr and Mrs Anthony Mollard, of Bossett, Southampton.

Mr D.J. Pearson and Miss E.L. Billings The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr Raymond Pearson, of Templeogue, Dublin, and the late Mrs E.L. Billings, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and daughter of Dr and Mrs Robert Billings, of Kemerton, Gloucestershire.

Mr L.R. Pincott and Mrs E.M. Sunderland The engagement is announced between Mr Leslie R. Pincott, CBE, of Wimbledon, and Mrs Elaine M. Sunderland, of Hurlingham Park, London. The marriage will take place in London on March 1, 1997.

Mr M.J.G. Reid and Miss L.J. Matthews The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr and Mrs M.J.G. Reid, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and Louise, daughter of Mrs Sue Matthews and the late Mr Evelyn Matthews, of Auldgrith, Dumfriesshire.

Mr L.L. Schmeigelow and Miss S.H. Clegg The engagement is announced between Mr L.L. Schmeigelow, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and Mrs S.H. Clegg, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and daughter of Mr Jonathan Clegg, of West Hampstead, London, and Mrs George Chester, of Malvern, Worcestershire.

Mr N. Wiczorek and Miss J.C. Roberts The engagement is announced between Mr N. Wiczorek, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and Mrs J.C. Roberts, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and daughter of Mr Michael Wiczorek, of Edinburgh, and Josephine, only daughter of Dr and Mrs Christopher Roberts, of Horndes, Hampshire.

Mr N.W. Reynolds and Miss O.J.C. Nall

The engagement is announced between Neil William, younger son of Mr and Mrs N.W. Reynolds, of Corwen, Denbighshire, and Mrs Timothy Crook, of Dunhead, Dorset, and Elena, younger daughter of Bishop Peter Coleman and Princess Donata, Mrs Peter Coleman, of West Bagborough, Somerset.

Mr C.E.K. Sater and Miss L.J.P. Binnie The engagement is announced between Charles, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Sater, of Dunblair, Dorset, and Mrs L.J.P. Binnie, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Binnie, of Ockham, Surrey.

Mr C.J. Wardle and Miss H.A. Kettlewell The engagement is announced between Charles, son of Mr and Mrs C.J. Wardle, of Dunblair, Dorset, and Mrs H.A. Kettlewell, of 10, Haverhill, Hertfordshire, and daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Kettlewell, of Ockham, Surrey.

Mr S.B. Young and Miss L.J. Bingley The engagement is announced between Brian Young, of Kingston, Jamaica, and Liza, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Bingley, of Hatfield Broad Oak, Hertfordshire.

Mr K.G.W. Collins and Miss K.M. Hollis The engagement is announced between Kenneth Guy Wyndham Collins, elder son of Mr and Mrs Graham Collins, of Storrington, West Sussex, and Miss Katharine Mary Hollis, daughter of the late Mr K.G.W. Collins, of Storrington, West Sussex, and Mrs Pauline Hollis, of Barnes, London.

Canon Dr John Polkinghorne, Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral, and recently retired as President of Queen's College, Cambridge, to be a Six Preacher of Canterbury Cathedral.

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Bedford High School

The Spring Term begins today. The 11+ supplementary entrance examination is on January 21. Auditions for Music Scholarships will take place on January 23 and the 13+ entrance examination on January 30 and 31. An Open Evening will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 4.30pm - 6.30pm. A Chamber Concert is arranged for February 13 and the Upper School Spring Concert for March 19. The John Lyon Sports Centre and the new Memorial Library will be formally opened on Tuesday, February 18, at 2.15pm by The Duke of Edinburgh.

The King's School, Canterbury The Lent term begins today. A Confirmation Service will be held in the Cathedral on Sunday, March 9, at which the Bishop of Maidstone will confirm. Term will end on Saturday, March 22.

Laymer Upper School, W6 The Spring Term commenced today at Laymer Upper School, and ends on March 27. The Joint Concert of orchestras, Laymer Upper, Godolphin & Laymer, and the Johnmum, Hamburg, will be on Tuesday, March 18, at St Paul's Church, W6. The Sixth Form Gold Production on March 20-22 is 'The Tenth Muse'. Old boys who have not recently been in contact are invited to contact the O.I. Office at school. Details on Admissions procedures are available from the Registrar, on 0181 741 851. The School has charitable status and provides quality education.

Church's College, Lent Term at Church's College begins today. The College entrance examination will take place on Saturday, February 1. Half term is from February 8 to February 17. The Captain of Boys Hockey is Daniel Clark and the Captain of Girls Hockey is Joanna Langford. The O.C.C. dinner at the East India Club will be held on Friday, May 9 and bookings can be made through the College office. The O.C.C. AGM will be held at Church's College on Monday, February 17, at 7.30pm. Term ends on March 21.

Holwood House, Colchester Spring Term begins today at Holwood House, Colchester. Out of the Blue will be performed on January 23-25. The Spring Concert is on Friday, March 14, and ends with Open Morning on March 22.

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The John Lyon School, Harrow

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Northbourne Park

The Spring Term begins on Monday, January 6, with 224 pupils on roll. Mr Robin Edmunds joins the school from Milne Court to teach Maths. The Year 7 pantomime will be performed on January 24 and Year 8 will host a dinner party for their parents on February 7. Year 8 and Cinquante Carers morning takes place on March 20, with term finishing after the school concert on Saturday, March 22.

Parsons Mead School, Ashted The centenary year begins with the start of term today. A Service of Thanksgiving is to take place on January 22. The Centenary Ball will be on March 15 preceded by a special evening concert. The Senior's centenary outing is to Bruges, the Juniors' to Legoland at Windsor. Open Day takes place on July 5 and Senior Prize Giving is on September 25. The drama productions in 1997 are *Since Great Grandmother's Day* on March 20, *The Wizard of Oz* on March 31/4/5, and *Much Ado About Nothing* on December 3/4/5. A book *An Act of Faith* telling the story of 100 years of Parsons Mead is available from the school. Old Girls are invited to telephone the school on 01372 27640 for further details of the centenary events.

Pocklington School, York The Lent Term at Pocklington School, York, begins today. Old Pocklingtonians will take place in Oxford on Saturday, March 1, and in London on Saturday, March 1 - times and venues to be confirmed. The new Head of the Junior School, from January 1997, will be Mr Alan Dennis.

The Princess Helena College, The Spring Term begins today with a record number of pupils on roll. The School, Lord Lewis of Newham takes over as Chairman of Governors. The Governors have introduced three Sports Scholarships, and these will be awarded, along with Academic Music and Art Scholarships, in the week beginning February 24. The Muriel de Vigny Music Competition is on February 7 and the School Concert on March 14. There is an Open Morning on March 1. Term ends on March 21 and is immediately followed by the 24 hour visit for prospective pupils for September 1997.

The Leys School, Cambridge The Lent Term begins today with a record number of pupils on roll. The School, Lord Lewis of Newham takes over as Chairman of Governors. The Governors have introduced three Sports Scholarships, and these will be awarded, along with Academic Music and Art Scholarships, in the week beginning February 24. The Muriel de Vigny Music Competition is on February 7 and the School Concert on March 14. There is an Open Morning on March 1. Term ends on March 21 and is immediately followed by the 24 hour visit for prospective pupils for September 1997.

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Anniversaries

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Pressley proves himself the king of defenders



INVESTMENT in a Dundee United defender has proved profitable for players in *The Times* Interactive Team Football competition. Steven Pressley's two goals against Aberdeen on New Year's Day helped to give him a points tally of 14 this week, the highest by one player in the game.

Both the weekly and the monthly winners included Pressley. The weekly winner, Mr P. Dolan, of Evesham, scored 71 points, with his team, Evesham Earners, over the week to win his £250 prize. The monthly winner was Mr D. Edmondson, of Worthing, whose team Edmo Uid scored 136 points and thus leaves Mr Edmondson £1,000 better off.

Mr Dolan's team is:

Goalkeeper
M. Bosnich (Aston Villa)

Full backs
M Malpas (Dundee Utd)
S Pearce (Nottm Forest)

Central defenders
F Leboeuf (Chelsea)
S Pressley (Dundee Utd)

Midfield players
S Agnew (Sunderland)
R di Matteo (Chelsea)
M Isaias (Coventry)
D Lennon (Raith)

Strikers
D Saunders (Nottm Forest)
A Shearer (Newcastle)

Manager
B Little (Aston Villa)



Humphreys scores his second goal against Grimsby. The Sheffield Wednesday forward gained five points this week



change up to two players each week and to adjust your team if one of your players is actually transferred out of the FA Carling Premiership or Bell's Scottish League premier division.

You can make transfers only by telephone. Using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone), call the 0991 866 968 line during the times given. From outside the United Kingdom, you must call 0044 990 200 668.

When making a transfer, you must ensure that the team does not contain more than two individuals (two players or one player and a manager) from the same club.

If you are lagging behind the leading team selectors, the transfer system will be an appealing option to you in the chase for the prizes — the overall £50,000, monthly £1,000 or weekly £250.

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS IN ITF

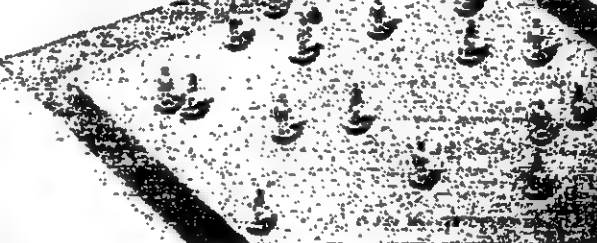
All 1996-7 matches in the FA Carling Premiership, FA Cup, Bell's Scottish League premier division and Tennents Scottish Cup from August 17 count for points. Penalty shootouts do not count but results decided in this way will count for managers.

POINTS SCORED		
Goalkeeper	Striker	
Keeps clean sheet*	Scores goal	2pts
Scores goal	All players	
Saves penalty	Appearance†	1pt
Full back/Central defender	Scores hat-trick	6pts
Keeps clean sheet*	Manager	
Scores goal	Team wins	3pts
Midfield player	Team draws	1pt
Keeps clean sheet*		
Scorers.com		

POINTS DEDUCTED			
Goalkeeper		Booked	
Concedes goal	2pts	Concedes penalty	1pt
Full back/Central defender		Misses penalty	1pt
Concedes goal	1pt	Scores own goal	1pt
All players		Manager	
Sent off	3pts	Team losses	1pt

* must have played for 75 minutes in the match

* must have played for 45 minutes in the match



HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER IN ITF

Call 0897 866 968

If telephoning from outside the United Kingdom call 44 (0) 200 888

You may make transfers only by telephone using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). You will need your ten-digit selector PIN, which you will have to tap in, not speak. Follow the simple instructions and tap in the five-digit codes of the players you are transferring to.

You may only make transfers in one team per telephone call. If you have entered into teams and want to make transfers in both, you must make two separate calls.

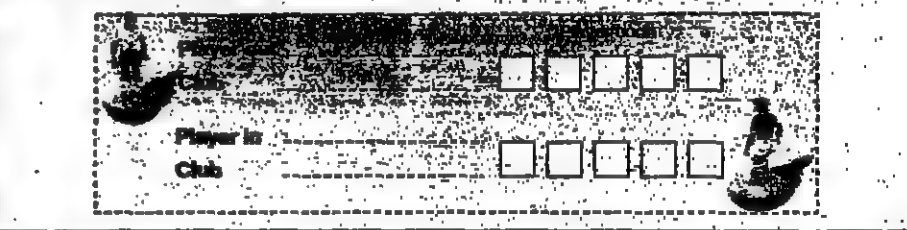
You may transfer two (but no more than two) individuals (two players or one player and a manager) during a transfer week. A player being transferred out must be replaced by one from the same category and you must keep to the team format of a goalkeeper, two full backs, two central defenders, four midfield players, two strikers and a manager. You must not exceed the £25 million budget and have no more than two individuals from the same club. Incorrect transfers will be rejected and your team will remain in its previous form.

The transfer week runs from 00.01 on Tuesday to midnight the following Monday. Transfers made before noon each day will become effective immediately. Transfers made after noon will become effective for matches played after noon on the following day.

Your new player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The current score of the player transferred out remains part of your team score but he then ceases to score for you.

If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You must adjust your team by using the transfer system to avoid missing out on points.

Cells will be charged at 45p per minute cheap rate, 50p per minute at other times. Calls made from public telephones may cost approximately twice as much.



THE LEADING 250 ENTRIES IN THE TIMES INTERACTIVE TEAM

Team	(Player's name)	Pts	Team	(Player's name)	Pts	Team	(Player's name)	Pts	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
1 John Hunt Tautman D	(J Hunt)	428	108 AFC	(M Baber)	353	180 Inter The Hat	(M Viner)	353	180 Inter The Hat	(M Viner)	353
2 Sophie And Sam	(G Foster)	428	109 Hunter's Mob	(C Hunter)	353	180 Murray's Magicians	(M MacMillan)	353	180 Murray's Magicians	(M MacMillan)	353
3 John Hunt Tautman H	(J Hunt)	421	110 Orville Classion	(J Bradshaw)	352	180 Ideal 150485	(G Daw)	352	180 Ideal 150485	(G Daw)	352
4 Jones Boys Eight	(M Jones)	414	114 Subwith Utd 3	(M Larcombe)	352	180 Akle Is Great	(J Holliday)	352	180 Akle Is Great	(J Holliday)	352
5 John Hunt Tautman F	(J Hunt)	408	114 Always Portugal 1	(V Guimaraes)	352	180 Paulo's Last Foot	(A Ozanna)	352	180 Paulo's Last Foot	(A Ozanna)	352
6 Jabberwocky	(P A Amos)	407	114 I Hate Alan Hinson	(V Cox)	352	180 S Giff Tautman 5	(S Giff)	352	180 S Giff Tautman 5	(S Giff)	352
7 Weasley 3	(J Brown)	407	114 Turner's Emers 8	(P Turner)	352	180 Turner's Emers 1	(P Turner)	352	180 Turner's Emers 1	(P Turner)	352
8 Nobby 3	(J Brown)	406	114 Lesley's Legends	(L Michaels)	352	180 M Corleas	(M Corleas)	352	180 M Corleas	(M Corleas)	352
9 Purple Rain	(S Gohl)	403	114 Bow Utd	(K J Burns)	352	180 Midfield Magic	(J Pregon)	352	180 Midfield Magic	(J Pregon)	352
10 Raj Is Back To Kill 8	(R Gohl)	403	114 Nobby 12	(J Brown)	352	180 KILFC	(C Sloan)	352	180 KILFC	(C Sloan)	352
11 Diggers	(V Cox)	403	122 RKV 3	(C Vanezee)	351	180 The Dansters	(C C Vewers)	351	180 The Dansters	(C C Vewers)	351
12 Raj Is Back To Kill 8	(R Gohl)	399	122 Alderbrook Villa	(M Jones)	351	180 Turner's Tigers	(C Turner)	351	180 Turner's Tigers	(C Turner)	351
13 Boston Cotts	(B McEwen)	399	122 Supercats	(J Taylor)	351	180 LCO	(T Taylor)	351	180 LCO	(T Taylor)	351
14 Jones Boys Three	(M Jones)	397	122 John Hunt Tautman A	(J Hunt)	351	180 Raj Is Back To Kill 1	(R Gohl)	351	180 Raj Is Back To Kill 1	(R Gohl)	351
15 Nobby	(J Brown)	397	126 Dour Rangers 3	(E Clayton)	350	180 Raj Is Back To Kill 2	(R Gohl)	351	180 Raj Is Back To Kill 2	(R Gohl)	351
16 Edmo Utd	(D Edmondson)	396	127 Jan 2	(J Clayton)	349	180 Elkhorn United	(P Leader)	350	180 Elkhorn United	(P Leader)	350
17 Gangsters	(A Lone)	396	128 No Midfield	(J B Portwood)	348	180 Lloyd's Barge	(D Goodwin)	350	180 Lloyd's Barge	(D Goodwin)	350
18 Raj Is Back To Kill 7	(R Gohl)	393	129 Tottin' Five	(J Taylor)	347	180 Turner's Emers 4	(P Turner)	350	180 Turner's Emers 4	(P Turner)	350
19 John Hunt Tautman E	(J Hunt)	392	130 FC Plants	(J Mulcock)	346	180 W Gooey	(J W Gooey)	350	180 W Gooey	(J W Gooey)	350
20 Moah's Ark	(G P Dolan)	392	130 Central Athletic	(N Skipper)	346	180 SJJ	(J Doughy)	350	180 SJJ	(J Doughy)	350
21 Where's Ray Gone?	(P Fromm)	391	130 Caroline D	(A Luckhurst)	346	180 Powergen	(J Doughy)	350	180 Powergen	(J Doughy)	350
22 Nonchalant AFC 3	(R J Ward)	389	130 Raj Is Back To Kill 3	(J Gohl)	346	180 Bothered FC	(D Lee)	350	180 Bothered FC	(D Lee)	350
23 Swain's Team	(B Howes)	387	130 Inter The Unknown	(P Barrow)	346	180 DGS Is Out Of Order	(M Wheatley)	350	180 DGS Is Out Of Order	(M Wheatley)	350
24 Inter The Pub	(M Ward)	386	135 Alameda FC	(A Silfken)	345	180 Sverrege On Justice FC	(N H)	350	180 Sverrege On Justice FC	(N H)	350
25 Brainbush United	(C Weiss)	386	135 Joking	(P Fellen)	345	180 J Vort Utd	(J Staszewicz)	350	180 J Vort Utd	(J Staszewicz)	350
26 Jones Boys One	(M L Jones)	385	135 Fendon United	(E Cowen)	345	180 Mann Farnley Langman	(M Madden)	350	180 Mann Farnley Langman	(M Madden)	350
27 Bob's Boys 2	(R Calder)	385	135 Patrick Billeo 3	(J Hamilton)	345	180 Scm Lovers	(P Farina)	350	180 Scm Lovers	(P Farina)	350
28 John Hunt Tautman B	(J Hunt)	385	135 Langsley Lads	(N Finch)	345	180 Watford United	(T Shelley)	350	180 Watford United	(T Shelley)	350
29 Nobby 11	(J Brown)	384	135 Tarr Academics	(A Kirtwood)	345	180 Do I Met U Man Utd	(C D Woodward)	350	180 Do I Met U Man Utd	(C D Woodward)	350
30 Nobby 21	(J Brown)	384	135 Thing Fish	(J Doughy)	345	180 Graham's Heroes	(S A Luckhurst)	350	180 Graham's Heroes	(S A Luckhurst)	350
31 Storm	(P Mills)	382	142 DJB 2	(D Sention)	344	180 Caroline C	(S A Luckhurst)	350	180 Caroline C	(S A Luckhurst)	350
32 Inter The Stand	(M Ward)	382	142 Steady Scorers	(J Stevenson)	344	180 Hammy's Heroes	(S A Luckhurst)	350	180 Hammy's Heroes	(S A Luckhurst)	350
33 John Hunt Tautman C	(J Hunt)	379	142 CUOK	(G Weiss)	344	180 Mel Bushers	(D Curzon)	350	180 Mel Bushers	(D Curzon)	350
34 Nobby 20	(J Brown)	379	142 Aggression FC	(W Heslop)	344	180 Desolation Men	(J Murray)	350	180 Desolation Men	(J Murray)	350
35 Tulip's Tops	(D Tulip)	379	142 AS	(K Farhall)	344	180 Scotty's Puppies II	(E G Ryan)	350	180 Scotty's Puppies II	(E G Ryan)	350
36 ABC	(M Baber)	377	142 Football Jumbies	(J Melling)	344	180 The Tarrs' Angels	(M Farina)	350	180 The Tarrs' Angels	(M Farina)	350
37 Subwith Utd 5	(M Larcombe)	377	142 Arath	(J Fyfe)	344	180 Sid In A Carry On	(R Farnley)	350	180 Sid In A Carry On	(R Farnley)	350
38 Nobby 29	(J Brown)	376	142 Hull Red Devils	(G Foster)	344	180 W Gooey	(J W Gooey)	350	180 W Gooey	(J W Gooey)	350
39 Bad Time Boys	(R Crook)	376	142 Where's Aunty?	(J Saunders)	344	180 S Giff Tautman 5	(S Giff)	352	180 S Giff Tautman 5	(S Giff)	352
40 NST Monkies	(J Staszewicz)	375	150 Set Against Odds	(S Shipley)	343	180 Do I Met U Man Utd	(C D Woodward)	350	180 Do I Met U Man Utd	(C D Woodward)	350
41 Nobby 25	(J Brown)	375	150 Super Big Boys	(J Staszewicz)	343	180 Walker's Winners	(R Pratt)	350	180 Walker's Winners	(R Pratt)	350
42 Brown's Boys XI	(J Brown)	374	150 Rainbow Wonders	(G Wales)	343	180 T 20	(T Bassam)	350	180 T 20	(T Bassam)	350
43 Team C	(A Lone)	374	150 Totted Two	(E Kishy)	343	180 Cootie's Gummies	(S Cooty)	350	180 Cootie's Gummies	(S Cooty)	350
44 Sky Rockets	(K Farhall)	374	150 Dynasno Hibs	(S Miller)	343	180 Des Boot	(D A Sutton)	350	180 Des Boot	(D A Sutton)	350
45 AB 4	(A Boyland)	374	150 Perseus Eagles	(S Abbott)	343	180 Grosvenor Tautman 1	(M Roberts)	350	180 Grosvenor Tautman 1	(M Roberts)	350
46 Nobby 34	(J Brown)	373	150 Bob's Boys 3	(R Calder)	343	180 Shifley Sparazars	(M Johnston)	350	180 Shifley Sparazars	(M Johnston)	350
47 JS August Monthly 1	(J Swires)	371	150 Del Goo 3	(M Peck)	343	180 Styffe	(C Rhydd)	350	180 Styffe	(C Rhydd)	350
48 Nobby 32	(J Brown)	371	150 Arath	(C Clark)	343	180 Dethish	(J Longstaff)	350	180 Dethish	(J Longstaff)	350
49 Pin Ups Two	(P Tusler)	370	160 Tague's 1st XI	(C Tague)	342	180 New We Are Two	(J McKean)	350	180 New We Are Two	(J McKean)	350
50 Sonky Boys	(R Crook)	370	160 Triple Top Tan	(P Bailey)	342	180 Peat's People 2	(P Gregorinou)	350	180 Peat's People 2	(P Gregorinou)	350
51 Bladenunners	(P Walters)	368	160 Shrew Motes	(H Brasher)	342	180 Soccer Superstars	(J McCollen)	350	180 Soccer Superstars	(J McCollen)	350
52 Nobby 1	(J Brown)	368	160 Fowrey City	(P Fowmes)	342	180 Farnley's Slammer	(J Staszewicz)	350	180 Farnley's Slammer	(J Staszewicz)	350
53 Crooky Boys	(R Crook)	367	160 Shack Attack	(R Shackleton)	342	180 Hells Vets	(J Roberts)	350	180 Hells Vets	(J Roberts)	350
54 JS August Monthly 2	(J Swires)	366	160 Fordy's Frinds	(C Fordy)	342	180 Bob's Boys 5	(M Jones)	350	180 Bob's Boys 5	(M Jones)	350
55 Layton Lions 7	(P Layton)	366	160 South 3	(P Loney)	341	180 Gorgon Boys	(K Munro)	350	180 Gorgon Boys	(K Munro)	350
56 You're Not Very Well	(J Laskowski)	366	165 Kelly's Boat	(T Bassam)	341	180 Dingle	(D Pritch)	350	180 Dingle	(D Pritch)	350
57 Inter The Bin	(M Ward)	366	165 T 35	(J O'Connell)	341	180 Spurns 124	(J Duddy)	350	180 Spurns 124	(J Duddy)	350
58 Concorde Barons	(S Mangle)	366	165 Mum's 1st XI	(P Pregon)	341	180 Murrer's Mates	(D Anderson)	350	180 Murrer's Mates	(D Anderson)	350
59 1st Elatt	(K J Burns)	366	165 Best Defence	(C A Kitchner)	341	180 1870 JFC	(J Ross)	350	180 1870 JFC	(J Ross)	350
60 It's About Revenge C	(R Gohl)	366	171 Simba's Dream	(G A Kitchner)	340	180 Drago's Drains	(M Hayward)	350	180 Drago's Drains	(M Hayward)	350
61 Marn FC	(M Baber)	366	171 Teddy Three	(G Bear)	340	180 Ian's B's	(J W Donaldson)	350	180 Ian's B's	(J W Donaldson)	350
62 Curritty Seahawks	(I Doughy)	366	171 Throes Shooters	(R Taylor)	340	180 Dine Bar Down	(R Davidson)	350	180 Dine Bar Down	(R Davidson)	350
63 JBC Sports	(A Bates)	364	171 We Can't Win	(C Fordy)	340	180 Dore's Emers	(D Lightowler)	350	180 Dore's Emers	(D Lightowler)	350
64 Enid 2	(J Haggan)	363	171 Skyline Sizzlers	(T Gordon)	340	180 Billy We Make XI	(no name)	350	180 Billy We Make XI	(no name)	350
65 Jones Boys Sky	(M Jones)	363	171 Robbexand 2	(R Preston)	340	180 TWFC 1	(T Wemy)	350	180 TWFC 1	(T Wemy)	350
66 Nobby 20	(J Brown)	363	171 Hely May	(N Pearson)	340	180 Red Star Storm	(P Miles)	350	180 Red Star Storm	(P Miles)	350
67 Inter The Wallet	(M Ward)	362	171 Olive From Down Under	(K James)	340	180 Glen Sheff	(P Miles)	350	180 Glen Sheff	(P Miles)	350
68 Nobby 7	(J Brown)	362	171 The Demises 1	(D Shields)	340	180 S Wilsan	(S Wilsan)	350	180 S Wilsan	(S Wilsan)	350
69 Nobby 14	(J Brown)	362	180 Beyond Frost	(R Foster)	340	180 PJB Ravens	(P J Butler)	350	180 PJB Ravens	(P J Butler)	350
70 Skydivers	(A Burton)	362	180 PJB Ravens	(P J Butler)	350						

The ITF players, their points and their values if you are considering the transfer option

10101	M. Watt	Aberdeen	1.50	0	-3
10102	N. Walker	Aberdeen	1.00	-7	-1
10201	D. Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	0	+27
10202	V. Barham	Arsenal	0.75	0	0
10203	J. Little	Arsenal	0.75	+5	-10
10301	M. Bealich	Aston Villa	3.50	+5	+5
10302	M. Collins	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+19
10401	T. Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	+10	-4
10402	S. Givan	Blackburn Rovers	2.00	0	+4
10501	G. Marshall	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	+1
10502	S. Kerr	Celtic	3.00	0	+1
10601	D. Kharine	Chelsea	2.50	0	+10
10602	K. Hitchcock	Chelsea	2.00	0	-20
10701	F. Grodas	Chelsea	3.00	+10	+8
10702	S. Ogrzewiec	Coventry City	1.50	-3	-13
10801	J. Fidler	Coventry City	0.50	0	0
10802	M. Taylor	Derby County	1.00	0	0
10901	A. Mowatt	Derby County	1.00	0	-4
10902	L. Key	Dundee United	0.50	0	-10
11001	J. Westwater	Dundee United	0.50	+10	-34
11002	N. Southall	Everton	2.50	+2	-9
11101	P. Gerrard	Everton	2.50	0	+1
11102	G. Rousset	Hull City	1.50	+17	-16
11201	J. Leighton	Hull City	1.50	-12	-16
11301	D. Lelovici	Kilmarnock	1.00	-3	-19
11401	M. Bealich	Leeds United	1.50	0	0
11501	P. Evans	Leeds United	0.25	0	0
11502	N. Martin	Leeds United	0.25	-5	-2
11601	K. Poole	Leicester City	1.00	0	-6
11602	K. Koller	Leicester City	1.00	0	-13
11701	D. James	Liverpool	5.00	+4	+15
11702	A. Warner	Liverpool	0.50	0	0
11801	P. Schuster	Manchester United	5.00	+10	+8
11802	R. van der Grint	Manchester United	1.50	0	+5
11901	G. Walsh	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	+23
11902	A. Miller	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-23
12001	S. Horro	Motherwell	1.50	0	-19
12101	S. Heston	Newcastle United	4.00	+4	0
12102	S. Snickel	Newcastle United	3.00	0	0
12201	M. Connolly	Nottingham Forest	2.50	+10	-31
12202	A. Fells	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0
12301	T. Wright	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0
12302	S. Thomson	Rath Rovers	0.50	-3	-25
12401	A. Goren	Rangers	5.00	-1	-17
12402	K. Giesman	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	-1	+4
12501	G. Clarke	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0	0
12502	D. Bennett	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0	0
12601	N. Moss	Southampton	0.25	0	+2
12602	C. Woods	Southampton	1.50	0	-19
12701	L. Perez	Sunderland	0.50	-4	-21
12702	A. Cotton	Sunderland	1.00	0	+9
12801	J. Walker	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	-3	-2
12802	E. Beardsley	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0
12901	L. Miloskovic	West Ham United	2.00	-2	-18
12902	S. Mouton	West Ham United	0.50	0	+5
13001	N. Sullivan	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0
13002	P. Heald	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0

20101	B. McGinnis	Aberdeen	2.00	-3	+8
20102	L. Dixon	Arsenal	3.00	0	+20
20201	N. Winterburn	Arsenal	3.00	+4	+28
20202	S. Morrow	Arsenal	1.00	0	+1
20301	S. Staunton	Aston Villa	3.00	+4	+28
20302	A. Wright	Aston Villa	3.00	+4	+28
20401	G. Milsom	Aston Villa	0.25	0	0
20402	P. King	Aston Villa	0.25	0	0
20501	F. Nelson	Aston Villa	3.00	+3	+28
20502	H. Berg	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	+3	+28
20601	G. Le Sax	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	+3	+28
20602	J. Kenna	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	+3	+28
20701	G. Croft	Blackburn Rovers	1.50	0	+2
20702	S. Ogrzewiec	Celtic	3.00	+1	+1
20801	D. Paterson	Chelsea	3.00	+3	+28
20802	S. Clarke	Chelsea	2.00	+7	+7
20901	T. Phelan	Chelsea	2.00	-1	-2
20902	S. Minto	Chelsea	1.00	+2	+3
21001	D. Burrows	Coventry City	1.50	0	-7
21002	S. Clarke	Coventry City	1.00	0	-7
21101	M. Hall	Coventry City	1.00	0	-7
21102	R. Gerrard	Coventry City	1.50	0	-2
21201	C. Powell	Derby County	1.50	0	+3
21202	D. Yates	Derby County	1.00	0	+4
21301	P. Parker	Derby County	1.00	0	+4
21302	M. Malpas	Dundee United	0.50	+1	+4
21401	S. Perry	Dundee United	0.50	+1	+4
21402	N. Duffy	Dundee United	0.50	0	-7
21501	C. Miller	Dunfermline	0.25	+8	-7
21502	A. Tod	Dunfermline	0.25	+8	-7
21601	M. Hoggard	Everton	2.50	-1	-4
21602	A. Hinchcliffe	Everton	2.50	-1	-4
21701	E. Barrett	Everton	1.50	+3	+1
21702	S. Locke	Everton	1.00	0	-5
21801	N. Poulton	Everton	1.00	0	-5
21802	W. Miller	Hibernian	1.00	-3	-1
21901	A. Dow	Hibernian	1.00	-3	-1
21902	G. MacPherson	Kilmarnock	0.50	0	+10
22001	K. Kelly	Leeds United	3.00	-2	+14
22002	A. Doran	Leeds United	1.50	-2	+3
22101	S. Doran	Leeds United	0.50	-3	+12
22102	G. Hall	Leeds United	1.00	0	-4
22201	M. Whitlow	Leeds United	0.50	0	+8
22202	S. Grayson	Leeds United	0.50	0	+8
22301	N. Lewis	Leeds United	0.50	0	-2
22302	F. Roling	Leeds United	0.50	0	-2
22401	R. Jones	Leeds United	0.50	0	-2
22402	R. Jones	Liverpool	1.50	0	-2
22501	S. Bjornelye	Liverpool	0.50	+4	+28
22502	L. Irwin	Manchester United	4.00	+5	+28
22601	G. Neville	Manchester United	3.00	+7	+28
22602	P. Neville	Manchester United	3.00	0	+2
22701	N. Cox	Manchester United	3.00	0	+2
22702	C. Morris	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-1
22801	C. Fleming	Middlesbrough	0.75	+1	-4
22802	C. Blackmore	Middlesbrough	0.25	+3	-2
22901	S. McKinnon	Motherwell	0.50	0	-1
22902	W. Barton	Newcastle United	3.00	0	-3
23001	S. Wilson	Newcastle United	2.50	0	+2
23002	R. Elliott	Newcastle United	2.50	0	+2
23101	J. Beardsley	Newcastle United	2.50	+3	+10
23102	S. Pearce	Nottingham Forest	4.00	+3	+8
23201	L. Lytle	Nottingham Forest	2.00	+8	0
23202	A. I. Hazledine	Nottingham Forest	1.00	+8	+11
23301	N. Jerkin	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	-3
23302	P. Bonner	Rath Rovers	0.50	-1	-8
23401	D. Kirkwood	Rath Rovers	0.50	-1	-8
23402	D. Robertson	Rangers	2.50	+15	-1
23501	J. Brown	Rangers	2.00	0	0
23502	I. Nolan	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+18
23601	P. Atherton	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+18
23602	S. Miel	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	0	+3
23701	D. Staniford	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00	+10	-10
23702	L. Briscoe	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0	-5
23801	J. Dodd	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	-5
23802	F. Bennell	Sheffield Wednesday	0.75	-5	-14
23901	S. Charlton	Sheffield Wednesday	0.75	-5	-14
23902	K. Kubicki	Sunderland	0.50	0	-4
24001	M. Scott	Sunderland	0.25	-1	-1
24002	A. Austin	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	-2	-2
24101	C. Wilson	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	+17
24102	J. Edinburg	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	-1	-1
24201	D. Kershaw	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0
24202	S. Carr	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	-1	-1
24301	J. Dickie	West Ham United	4.00	0	+4
24302	T. Bresnahan	West Ham United	1.00	0	0
24401	K. Rowland	West Ham United	1.00	0	0
24402	M. Brown	West Ham United	0.50	0	0
24501	K. Brown	West Ham United	0.50	0	0
24601	B. Thatcher	Wimbledon	1.50	0	+9
24602	A. Kimble	Wimbledon	0.75	0	+3
24701	K. Cunningham	Wimbledon	0.75	0	+3
24702	D. Jupp	Wimbledon	0.75	0	+3
24801	C. Peary	Wimbledon	0.25	0	+18

30101	B. Irvine	Aberdeen	2.00	-4	-4
30102	C. Woodthorpe	Aberdeen	1.50	0	-3
30201	A. Adams	Arsenal	4.00	+4	+23
30202	S. Bould	Arsenal	3.00	+3	+24
30301	M. Keown	Arsenal	3.00	+4	+28
30302	A. Linington	Arsenal	1.00	0	+8
30401	S. Marshall	Arsenal	1.00	0	0



Ravaneli tangles with the Chester defence. His two goals on Saturday have boosted his ITF tally to 45 points

30301	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.50	0	+16
30302	U Ehlgrub	Aston Villa	3.00	+3	+38
30303	C Tiller	Aston Villa	1.00	+3	+12
30304	R Scimeca	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+14
30401	C Hendry	Blackburn Rovers	4.00	+8	+17
30402	I Pearce	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	0
30403	C Coleman	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	-3
30404	N Markar	Blackburn Rovers	0.50	0	+2
30501	T Boyd	Celtic	3.00	+2	+14
30502	M MacKury	Celtic	1.50	+3	+5
30503	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.50	-1	+11
30504	B O'Neill	Celtic	3.00	-2	+2
30601	M Doherty	Chelsea	2.50	+8	+21
30602	F Lebowitz	Chelsea	2.50	+8	+21
30603	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00	0	0
30604	D Lee	Chelsea	2.00	0	+3
30605	A Myers	Chelsea	1.50	0	+6
30606	E Johnson	Chelsea	1.50	0	+6
30701	L Daley	Coventry City	2.00	+1	+8
30702	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	-1	+5
30703	I Stanec	Derby County	2.50	0	-5
30801	D Wassall	Derby County	1.00	0	0
30802	P McGrath	Derby County	2.50	0	0
30803	J Laurson	Derby County	1.00	0	+8
30804	M Carbone	Derby County	0.50	0	-1
30901	S Pressley	Dundee United	1.00	+14	+36
30902	J McInnes	Dundee United	0.75	-1	-18
31001	I Den Blannen	Dunfermline	0.75	-1	-18
31002	D Unsworth	Everton	2.50	0	+11
31101	D Watson	Everton	2.50	+3	+13
31102	C Short	Everton	2.00	0	+9
31201	D McPherson	Everton	1.00	+3	+11
31202	P Ritchie	Hibernian	1.00	+4	+16
31301	J McLaughlin	Hibernian	0.50	0	-4
31302	S Walsh	Hibernian	0.75	-1	-12
31401	G Hunter	Hibernian	0.50	-5	-8
31402	M Reilly	Kilmarnock	1.00	-2	-1
31501	R Montgomery	Kilmarnock	0.75	0	-1
31502	D Wetherall	Leeds United	2.50	-2	+14
31601	R Johnson	Leeds United	1.00	0	+2
31602	L Radebe	Leeds United	1.50	0	-8
31701	J Pemberton	Leeds United	0.50	0	0
31702	S Walsh	Leeds United	1.00	0	+8
31801	J Watts	Leeds United	1.00	0	+9
31802	P Kean	Leeds United	0.50	0	-1
31901	S Prior	Leeds United	1.00	0	+5
31902	J Salib	Liverpool	3.50	+3	+24
32001	M Wright	Liverpool	1.50	+2	+1
32002	N Ruddock	Liverpool	3.00	0	+13
32101	D Matteo	Liverpool	1.00	+4	+17
32102	G Palfrey	Manchester United	3.50	0	+2
32201	D May	Manchester United	3.00	+8	+28
32202	R Johnson	Manchester United	2.50	+7	+25
32301	P Pearson	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-4
32302	S Vickars	Middlesbrough	1.50	+2	-10
32401	D Whyte	Middlesbrough	1.50	+3	-12
32402	P Whelan	Middlesbrough	0.75	0	-4
32501	P Martin	Motherwell	1.50	0	-8
32502	M van der Gaag	Motherwell	0.75	-5	-1
32601	P Albert	Newcastle United	4.50	+4	+17
32602	S Hogg	Newcastle United	1.50	0	+7
32701	D Peacock	Newcastle United	3.00	+4	+17
32702	C Cooper	Nottingham Forest	3.00	+8	+14
32801	S Chellie	Nottingham Forest	2.50	+7	+4
32802	S Blatterick	Nottingham Forest	1.00	0	-5
32901	S Dennis	Rath Rovers	1.00	-2	-24
32902	R Gough	Rangers	3.50	0	+34
33001	A McLaren	Rangers	3.00	-1	-3
33002	J Elford	Rangers	3.50	0	+17
33101	G Patric	Rangers	2.50	-1	-12
33102	J Wamsome	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+8
33201	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+20
33202	S Linington	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	-14
33301	M Wright	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	0
33302	S Linington	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	0
33303	A Pearce	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0
33304	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	0.50	0	-4
33401	M McMillan	Wimbledon	0.50	+1	+11
33402	S Fitzmaurice	Wimbledon	0.25	0	0

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

TUESDAY JANUARY 7 1997



Cementing a deal: Ross Dunn, right, personnel director of Blue Circle Cement, and Roger Davies, a driver at the company's Coudon works, near Alton Towers, Staffordshire, celebrate a ground-breaking job security deal announced yesterday, under which Blue Circle pledges there will be no compulsory redundancies for five years. Report, page 24

Warburg loses £1m as Azlan issue collapses

By Fraser Nelson

SBC WARBURG, the merchant bank, was left nursing losses of £1 million yesterday after the collapse of its £45.5 million rights issue for Azlan, the computer networking company.

The bank was obliged to buy 2.22 million shares at 640p each, 1.42 million of which it then sold off in a pool at 550p each, incurring a loss of £1.3 million. It cleared all of its shares by the close of trading.

Azlan wanted to buy Akam, a Dutch computing company, for £29.6 million. It was offering its new shares on a three-for-ten basis at 620p each, while its own shares were trading at 740p apiece. However, its shares kept falling weeks after they adjusted for the issue, dropping to 500p.

Analysts said the plunge came after the rights issue drew attention to Azlan's flagging growth rate. There is said to be concern that its margins may now be starting to slip as its product — networked computer services — begins to become more established and other companies join in. There was also concern about why the sum Azlan was planning to raise was £19 million over the costs of the acquisition.

The flop has drawn further attention to the City's rights issue structure, in which it is standard to charge a flat rate of 2 per cent commission regardless of the company.

Warburg had agreed to a lower commission of 1 1/4 per cent of the issue, growing by 1/4 per cent for every week after the 30 days' period. It has given Azlan a £25 million bridging loan for which it is charging £50,000. Azlan has agreed to pay a total fee of £593,000.

Azlan's shares rose 2 1/2p to 570p yesterday.

Pennington, page 25

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	4106.5	+17.0
Yield	3.75%	
FTSE All-Share	2012.51	+6.26
Nikkei	18446.00	+84.65
Dow Jones	8516.05	+71.96
S&P Composite	733.15	+5.12

LIB RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5%)
Long Bond	6 3/4%	(6%)
Yield	6.74%	(6.74%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
6-month interbank	5 1/2%	(5 1/2%)
12-month interbank	5 3/4%	(5 3/4%)
3-month bill	100%	(100%)

STERLING		
New York	1.6855	(1.6877)
London	1.6847	(1.6818)
DM	2.6364	(2.6348)
FF	8.9104	(8.9014)
SP	1.3536	(1.3552)
Yen	115.79	(116.23)
S index	99.0	(99.1)

DOLLAR		
London	1.6874	(1.6860)
DM	5.2523	(5.2515)
FF	1.3536	(1.3552)
Yen	115.79	(116.23)
S index	99.0	(99.1)

Tokyo close Yen 116.05

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Mar)	£24.10	(\$23.55)

GOLD		
London close	£358.55	(\$362.15)

* Figures midday trading price

Wickes shares return today

By Sarah Cunningham

TRADING in Wickes shares will restart today, six months after the discovery of serious accounting irregularities. The move is widely expected to smoke out a bidder for the DIY chain.

The company's heavily discounted £53.2 million rights issue and its capital reorganisation were backed by shareholders yesterday at an extraordinary general meeting. The one-for-one issue was priced at 150p per share after a ten-for-one consolidation, making them equivalent to 15p per existing share. Payment is due by January 27.

Shares in Wickes, whose former senior managers are facing investigation by the Serious Fraud Office, were suspended at 67p on June 25. Analysts reckon that the shares are likely to start trading today at between 170p and 200p — equivalent to 17p to 20p before the consolidation — although bid speculation could drive them higher.

Kingsfisher, owner of the B&Q chain, is considered the most likely buyer of Wickes, although it may hang back to see whether any other potential buyers emerge. The other main contender is expected to be RMC's Great Mills. However, one analyst suggested that any bid was likely to be pitched low. "No one has been able to make money in this end of the DIY market," he said.

Michael von Brentano, chairman, told yesterday's meeting that Lord Sieff and Peter Humphries, former non-executive directors, have not yet waived their right to a pension from the company but were being encouraged to do so. Mr Brentano and Robert Burrow, deputy chairman, have already waived their right. The company also said that it expects to make further changes to the board in the near future.

Mr Brentano told shareholders that Wickes is discussing the sale of its continental European operations with a number of possible buyers.

Pennington, page 25

Woolwich share bonanza offers average of £1,200

By Sara McConnell and Marianne Curphey

THE Woolwich Building Society's 2.57 million members will receive shares worth more than £1,200 on average, up to a maximum of around £5,437 each, if they approve the society's conversion to a bank, set for July.

The Woolwich's transfer document published yesterday values the society at £2.96 billion and £3.38 billion. At the midpoint value of £3.17 billion, each share would be worth 187p.

All qualifying members — those with at least £100 in their accounts on December 31, 1995 and December 31, 1996 — will receive 450 free shares, worth £944 at the midpoint value. This is at the top end of analysts' predictions. The society's 530,000 borrowers and 910,000 of its savers will receive just this basic bonus.

Of the 2 million qualifying savers, 1.2 million had been members for more than two years with between £1,000 and £50,000 in their accounts and will qualify for an extra variable bonus as well. This bonus will be calculated on the lower of two balances on December 31, 1995 and February 11, 1997, the date of the special general meeting at which members will vote on the conversion proposals.

Qualifying savers with at least £1,000 will receive four free shares for each £100 in their account. On this basis, they will receive a minimum of 40 extra shares and a maximum of 2,000. They include 60,000 savers with balances of £50,000 or above and stand to gain the maximum bonus worth around £5,437.

Children will not vote on the conversion but will be entitled to a statutory cash bonus of 10 per cent of their balance if the account is in their name.

The Woolwich said yesterday that if it had known in advance about proposed changes to conversion rules contained in the new Building Societies Bill published in December, it would have pressed ahead with mergers and acquisitions before it came to the stock market.

Under the new proposals, societies that go on the acquisition trail after conversion will lose their five-year protection from hostile takeovers. The society is lobbying for the Bill to be rewritten to allow societies to complete friendly mergers without losing protection.

John Stewart, chief executive, said that if the Woolwich was "unfettered" by this rule he would be interested in "a building society in the North of the country". Analysts speculated that this was most likely to have been the Northern Rock, but could have included the Bradford & Bingley, Skipton and Yorkshire societies.

After the resignation last year of Peter Robinson, the society's former chief executive, after revelations of expenses irregularities, a number of organisations approached the society believing that it was in disarray and hoping to get it for a knock-down price. But none of the approaches reached the stage of negotiating prices or conditions, Mr Stewart said.

The Woolwich has appointed Schroders as its financial adviser and sponsor for the flotation, and BZW to act as broker.

There are still payments to come from the following societies:

- Alliance & Leicester 24 million members. Basic payout 250 shares worth £1,000 in April.
- Halifax 9 million members. Average payout of £1,000 in June.
- Northern Rock 1 million members. Average payout £1,000 in the autumn.
- Bristol & West 1 million members. Average payout, for members of more than two years' standing, £1,000 in the summer.



John Stewart with the Woolwich transfer document yesterday

GB Railways makes express start on AIM

By Fraser Nelson

GB RAILWAYS, which last month won the Anglia rail franchise, more than doubled its market value yesterday when its shares started trading on the Alternative Investment Market.

The shares, placed with institutions at 100p, closed at 210p, leaving the start-up company valued at £18.4 million. This takes the value of the stake split between Michael Schabas and Max Steinfeld, two of its directors, to £2.44 million. The two each made a paper profit of £640,000 yesterday.

The company, chaired by Lord Sheppard of Didsbury and which started running the London to Norwich train service on Sunday, has raised £6.3 million from its flotation. It has pledged to spend £2 million on improving stations, to start a daily service between London and Great Yarmouth and serve Stratford station when the Jubilee Line extension opens. It must raise



Sheppard spending plans

Pressure grows for rise in rates

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

THE latest British money supply figures published yesterday support anecdotal evidence that the Christmas shopping season got off to a slow start but then enjoyed a lively late spurt.

Overall, retailers seem to have had a good month and many in the City now believe that the Chancellor will be under pressure from the Bank of England to raise base rates at the monetary meeting next Wednesday.

The narrow measure of money supply, M0, grew 0.9 per cent in December. Notes and coins in circulation — which account for the bulk of M0 with bankers' deposits making up the rest — rose 0.7 per cent. Although the relationship is far from certain, economists still look at growth in M0 as a guide to retail sales activity.

Annual growth in total M0 dipped to 7.1 per cent in November, largely because of

computing faxing imaging copying printing

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Canon

Blue Circle workers put security before pay

By Philip Bassett
Industrial Editor

BLUE CIRCLE, the cement company, looks set to win approval tomorrow for a new long-term job security agreement with its employees after concluding a five-year partnership deal with its core fleet drivers.

The agreement, announced yesterday, covers only 124 drivers but a union delegate conference tomorrow is expected to agree a much larger deal covering up to 2,000 process staff and craft employees.

The drivers' deal, negotiated over the past 12 months by the company and the GMB general and TGWU transport unions, will give core

fleet drivers a 3.5 per cent pay rise in 1997, plus a £200 one-off payment. Core drivers' gross pay now averages £21,000. An hour will also be taken off the drivers' working week.

This will be followed by a pay freeze in 1998 — a controversial aspect of the agreement — and then for the following three years a new pay review body will look at Blue Circle drivers' pay in comparison with rates in other haulage companies. In return, drivers will carry out immediate maintenance of their lorries, and will be trained to operate fork-lift trucks to load them if no one else is available.

As well as such increased work flexibility, the deal includes a series of principles to "maximise" job security. These include not

reviewing the option of contracting-out the haulage fleet over the lifetime of the agreement, with all sides working to ensure that fleet costs remain competitive.

In addition, Blue Circle will review annually its fleet size demands on the basis of the year's quietest business quarter, and drivers will accept and help to develop in-cab "telematic" computer systems to monitor and improve performance.

Ron Webb, the TGWU's road haulage national officer, said: "This is a landmark agreement which guarantees the working conditions of drivers at Blue Circle until well into the next millennium." Three years ago, Blue Circle made 20 per cent of its workforce

redundant in the face of increasing competition in the building materials industry.

The likely deal tomorrow offers similar job security provisions to those of the drivers, and specifically includes extensive plans for NVQ-level training, with any redundancies being voluntary and staff relocated if necessary.

Allan Black, GMB national secretary, said: "Our members are telling us loud and clear that this is their top priority — not pay, but job security." He called on other companies in the construction industry and beyond to emulate Blue Circle's partnership approach and reach similar deals that would offer enhanced employment security and improve their efficiency and profitability.

General Accident cuts bonuses to life policyholders

By Gavin Lumsden

GENERAL ACCIDENT yesterday announced across-the-board cuts in annual bonuses to its two million life policyholders. The insurer denied that endowment policyholders would have to increase their premiums after it reduced the annual bonus by 0.25 per cent to 3.25 per cent.

The cut means GA is offering £54.914 to a 30-year-old male non-smoking £50 monthly premium payer on a mature 20-year policy, 5.4 per cent less than 12 months ago. However, maturity values on 25-year policies were up 2.4 per cent at £114,554, a record high.

Friends Provident, which

broadly maintained bonus rates for its 800,000 with-profit holders, also announced falls in endowment maturity values with a 20-year policy paying £52,688, £1,400 less than a year ago.

Friends Provident also cut final bonuses for pension holders in its life assurance (formerly NM) business with bonuses on 35-year policies reduced from 112.2 to 105 per cent and 18-year policies from 62.7 to 54 per cent.

On the investment side, GA said it had cut bonuses for lump-sum with-profits investors from 7.25 per cent from 7.5 per cent last year. A £5,000

lump sum invested five years ago has grown to £7,717, equivalent to a net annual yield of 9.1 per cent, compared with £7,894 for a similar investment maturing last year that yielded 9.56 per cent net.

The company sliced 0.5 per cent off pension bonuses leaving annuities at 6 per cent and compound bonuses on unitised with-profit business at 8.5 per cent. GA said customers who had paid £200 monthly premiums into a 20-year with-profit policy would retire with £277,810, more than £5,000 less than if they had retired a year ago.

GA estimated its total bonus bill will be £250 million.

In spite of the cut in rates, Peter Hales, assistant general manager, said GA aimed to double annual new business to £2 billion by the year 2000 by expanding its investment and pension business.

This month GA launches its first attack on the personal equity plan (PEP) market with FT-SE tracker and UK growth and income Peps. Mr Hales said pension business had doubled since its acquisition of Provident Mutual last January.

He also vowed that GA would in 1997 resolve all its 1,500 cases of pensions mis-selling scandal, after last year's publication by the Securities and Investments Board of a simpler questionnaire for aggrieved investors.



Robin Barr tested the Iro-Bru based drink in Scotland

Vendex in move to take over job agency

By Martin Barker

VENDEX International, the Dutch retail and business services group, has launched an agreed takeover bid worth Fr2.5 billion for Bis, the French employment agency.

Vendex also plans a separate Dutch house listing for its business services division, whose annual turnover will more than double to six billion guilders (£2 billion).

The separately listed company would be Europe's third biggest provider of temporary employment services and the Continent's second biggest in commercial cleaning services.

Details of the proposed takeover emerged after Vendex reached agreement with the family of Laurent Negro, the founder of Bis. Vendex will acquire the family's 60 per cent interest in the company for Fr490 a share. The company will also shortly make an offer for the publicly held shares, which trade on the Paris bourse.

Bis is France's third biggest temporary-help agency after Adecco and Manpower. In 1995, the company had turnover of Fr9.2 billion. Critics have said Bis has focused too much on France and has been left behind in the trend towards globalisation.

Vendex derived 1.9 billion guilders of its total 1995-96 turnover of 11.3 billion guilders from employment services. Vendex, its subsidiary, is active mainly in the Benelux countries, but ranks fifth in France and also operates in Spain and Germany.

Souped-up tippie cure heads south

By Sarah Cunningham

A PRE-MIXED drink combining Scotland's favourite cure for hangovers with a favourite means of causing them will soon be available south of the border.

The drink, which is the result of an agreement between AG Barr, maker of Iro-Bru, and United Distillers, producer of Bell's Whisky, was introduced in Scotland in October last year and has been warmly received there. Robin Barr, chairman of AG Barr, said yesterday: "It will be available in the rest of the UK later this year."

Sweet, bright orange Iro-Bru is firmly aimed at teenage buyers, but Mr Barr said the whisky-based version is not an alcoholic. "There is no carbonated style labelling and it is clearly shown to be a combination of the two products," he said.

AG Barr, which also makes Tizer and Orangina, yesterday reported pre-tax profits for the year ended October 26 of £5.04 million compared with £4.58 million a year ago. Last year's figure included an exceptional charge of £1.42 million.

The company increased its final dividend from 6.2p to 6.65p, making a full-year dividend of 8.65p (8.2p). It is payable on April 7.

Safety tests extend life of reactors

By Christine Buckley
Industrial Correspondent

NUCLEAR reactors at the stations that clouded the privatisation of British Energy have passed safety tests to continue generating for another 10 years.

Advanced gas-cooled reactors at Hunterston B and Hinkley Point B, both 20 years old, were cleared by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) to carry on to 30 years — the original plan for both stations. British Energy hopes to win extensions beyond that date.

The temporary closure of both for repairs sparked controversy for the flotation of British Energy when engineers moved in just hours before the end of the public offer for the shares. Applications were already in the post and private investors were unable to pull out of the float, which suffered a discount on its first day of trading.

The granting of safety permits for the next 10 years is the first major review of British Energy's advanced gas-cooled reactors by the NII.

British Energy lifted its generation in the year to December 31 more than 11 per cent against the previous year. Last year was fettered by problems at Dungeness B.

Prosecutors charge Schneider with fraud

PROSECUTORS investigating one of Germany's biggest corporate scandals have charged Jürgen Schneider with fraud. Outlining charges against the disgraced entrepreneur, the Frankfurt prosecutors' office alleged that Herr Schneider duped banks into extending credit by overstating net income and forging bills. Herr Schneider, whose property empire collapsed under more than DM5 billion of debt in 1994, has been charged with credit fraud, serious fraud and a bankruptcy offence. The charges could put him in jail for up to 15 years.

The prosecutors said that they had found no evidence of any wrongdoing by banks, contrary to repeated claims by Herr Schneider that his creditors had sabotaged him. The bankruptcy sparked fears of a German property slump, left hundreds of small craftsmen fighting for their livelihoods, and exposed the Schneider banks to public outrage at the apparent ease with which he obtained funding.

CityJet debt written off

CREDITORS of CityJet, the Irish airline that operates between London City Airport and Dublin, have agreed to write off almost Ir£6 million to facilitate the company's survival. The write-off is part of a restructuring plan put forward by an examiner appointed by the Dublin High Court. Key unsecured creditors agreed to accept 25p in the pound. They include London City Airport, whose share of the write-off is believed to be Ir£1.8 million.

ICI Canadian purchase

ICI Paints (Canada), a subsidiary of the UK chemicals group, has completed the purchase of St Clair Paint & Wallpaper Corporation, a distribution network of about 350 locations, made up of company-owned stores, franchisees and authorised dealers, throughout Canada. Current sales of the decorative business of ICI Paints (Canada) are C\$150 million (£65 million) and the acquisition will raise sales by about 75 per cent, and increase outlets to more than 1,100. The price was not disclosed.

R-R contracts out

ROLLS-ROYCE'S industrial power group has followed the company's aerospace division and contracted out its information-technology operations in a £300 million, ten-year deal. The arrangement with EDS, the same company chosen by the aerospace division, will mean that 160 staff will move from Rolls-Royce and EDS will take over responsibility for computing infrastructure, information systems and business applications.

Capital Shopping deal

CAPITAL SHOPPING CENTRES, the retail property company, has bought a 15.5 per cent interest in UK Prime Property Partnership from Pensions Funds LP and Zeneca Pensions Property Fund for £28.47 million. UK Prime owns 80 per cent of the Victoria Centre, Nottingham, and has a 50 per cent interest in the Grosvenor Centre, Sutton Coldfield, and the Elmsleigh Centre, Staines. CSC already owns 20 per cent of Victoria Centre through the Victoria Centre Partnership.

Monsanto's \$1bn buy

MONSANTO COMPANY is to pay up to \$1.02 billion to acquire three companies involved in hybrid seed production. It is buying Holden's Foundation Seeds Inc., a producer of parent seeds used by retailers to create hybrid seeds, Corn States Hybrid Service Inc., and Corn States International, the worldwide marketing and sales representatives for Holden's products. More than 35 per cent of US corn acres use genetic material developed by Holden's, Monsanto said.

Carr Sheppards sold

CARR SHEPPARDS, the UK portfolio manager and broker that looks after £25 billion, has been acquired by Investec, South Africa's fifth-largest banking group. The acquisitive South African combine is thought to have paid Banque Indosuez, former owner of Carr Sheppards, about £175 million to £180 million. Nearly all of Carr's 200 staff are expected to keep their jobs. French-owned Indosuez last year sold its 75 per cent stake in Gartmore, the fund manager, to NatWest.

Lloyd's breakthrough

NISSAN Fire & Marine, an association of Japanese companies including Hitachi, Nissan Motors and Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank, is to underwrite business at Lloyd's of London, the first such investment by a Japanese company. Syndicate 2323 will be managed by Murray Lawrence Corporate, a subsidiary of the Whittington Group and Murray Lawrence Holdings. The syndicate, formed by Nissan Lloyd's Underwriting, will write marine and non-marine business.

BA passenger record

BRITISH AIRWAYS set a passenger load factor record for December after an increase of one percentage point to 69.1 per cent compared with December 1995. It said mainline scheduled revenue passenger kilometres in December rose 9.9 per cent. Growth in long-haul traffic was 11.3 per cent, surpassing the 3.6 per cent growth on UK-Europe routes. Demand for the airline's premium brands remained firm, with traffic growth rising 6 per cent. Main cabin growth was 10.6 per cent.

General Cable venture

GENERAL CABLE CORPORATION, the American subsidiary of Wauson, has formed a joint venture with Spectra Corporation for the development, manufacture and marketing of fibre and optic cable for the data communications market. The new company will be known as General Photonics. General Cable's investment in the joint venture will amount to about \$6.5 million. General Cable manufactures copper wire and cable products.

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER — THE TIMES

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To coincide with the launch of our Discovery Diet Guide, *The Times* has teamed up with LivingWell and other leading health clubs to offer you up to six free visits to any of the participating clubs listed in yesterday's newspaper.

The offer allows you to use the same facilities at the health clubs as those enjoyed by full members. Simply present the voucher below when you go for your pre-booked visit.

Readers who take up this offer will be entered into a prize draw with a chance to win an annual health club membership to your chosen club. There are memberships worth £40,000 to be won.



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This voucher entitles the bearer to a free day's membership at one of the health clubs listed in *The Times* on January 6 and 11, 1997. This voucher also acts as a prize draw entry coupon for the chance to win a free membership for a year to the winner's chosen health club. There are annual memberships worth a total of £40,000 to be won. The offer is valid until Friday February 28, 1997. This date is also the closing date for entry to the prize draw.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS 1. The offer is subject to availability. 2. Readers must book their visits in advance by telephone and state that they are using *The Times* offer. 3. This voucher must be presented when you turn up on the day. 4. The offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. 5. There will be additional charges for therapies. Please check what is included in the offer at the time of booking.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS 1. The offer is valid until February 28, 1997. 2. Your free visit(s) must be booked in advance by telephone quoting *The Times* offer. 3. The printed voucher(s) must be presented to the club when you make your visit(s). 4. Each voucher is only valid for one free visit. 5. A maximum of six free visits are allowed per reader. 6. No photocopies will be accepted. 7. The offer is subject to availability. 8. The offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. 9. There may be additional charges if you wish to book beauty treatments. 10. It is advisable to confirm what facilities are included in the offer at the time of booking.

CHANGING TIMES

Rumours drive shares into record book

Lanica's rise stuns brokers

By Jon Ashworth

THE City's latest wonder stock rose above £21 yesterday, as analysts mulled darkly about black tulips and South Sea Bubbles. Shares in Lanica Trust were worth just 137p three months ago, when Andrew Regan, a 31-year-old entrepreneur, appeared.

They have rocketed on persistent rumours that Littlewoods, the pools-to-stores group, is up to something with its retailing arm. The talk is of a deal involving Freeman's, the mail-order arm of Sears, with the whole package spun off in a separate

stock market listing. Tipsters have settled on Lanica.

Not since tulipomania gripped The Netherlands in the 1600s has there been anything like it. The shares closed at £18.50 on New Year's Eve, and powered on again yesterday, peaking at £21.50. Brokers were incredulous. One said: "One of these comes along once every ten years."

The gains say much for Mr Regan, whose father, Roger, is chief executive of Spring Ram, the kitchens-to-bathrooms group. He came to prominence in 1995, buying

the Co-op's food and drinks manufacturing arm, then selling it for £121 million after just seven months. He personally made £3 million on the deal.

Mr Regan resurfaced in October with a £4 million bid for New Guernsey Securities. He renamed it Lanica Trust and announced plans for an industrial holding company. The shares leapt 140p to 340p.

It could all go wrong, of course, but Lanica's share gain of 1,418 per cent by the end of 1996 secured Mr Regan's place in the City's history books.

Bank	Share	Unit
Australia S	2.23	0.07
Austria S	1.14	0.14
Belgium S	57.59	53.25
Canada S	2.45	2.38
Ceylon S	0.85	0.71
Ceylon S	10.70	9.00
Denmark S	9.53	7.88
France S	2.91	2.80
Germany S	435	410
Hong Kong S	12.72	12.72
India S	1.07	0.89
Italy S	0.81	0.78
Japan S	2713	2528
Malaysia S	21.40	185.40
Netherlands S	0.631	0.586
Netherlands S	3.129	2.888
New Zealand S	2.54	2.32
Norway S	250.20	217.00
Portugal S	275.50	258.00
Spain S	0.55	0.75
Sweden S	2.43	2.25
Switzerland S	19.025	17.025
USA S	1.790	1.680

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

□ Yellow card for followers of football fashion □ Double windfall for building society investors □ The class of 1996 (failed)

Coming home . . . to roost

ONE does not have to be out of sympathy with this country's infantile obsession with football to be worried about the prices that even the least appealing clubs are commanding on the stock market. This is a game that will have to end one day, and with more losers than winners.

Aside from greed, and attempts by mainly grown middle-class men to recapture childhood passions or establish some spurious street credibility, this hysteria is driven by the prospects for pay TV. Every club of any significance will have its own channel in the information era, some believe, and the addicts will have to pay, minute by minute, for their fix.

This optimism tempts teams from ever further down the rankings to seek quotations. The Media Intelligence Bulletin, the industry's leading research, has just published a useful demolition job which concludes that most quoted soccer clubs are, indeed, hopelessly overvalued.

It says that, by the year 2000, the market for pay per view TV will be 7.5 million homes, just twice the current level. Channels dedicated to individual clubs will not be viable, more profitable will be those given over to big games.

Liverpool and Newcastle, for example, can expect £15 million each. The also-rans get nothing. Of this windfall, half can be expected to be wasted on inflated salaries and transfer fees.

The Bulletin singles out loss-making Sunderland, struggling to stay in the Premier League. The only possible valuation is a multiple of turnover, of eight times last year's at the current share price. No business on earth can remain for ever on such a rating, yet if Sunderland slips from the top league, pay per view revenues will be minimal.

Football shares have always been 'dangerous' investments. First, they move according to the whims of a mischievous ball or a misplaced boot. Yesterday's rise for United and price fall for Spurs could as easily have been the other way around.

Second, the value to the fan is higher than to the ordinary investor, a distortion of the market. Add to that the unrealistic estimates being pumped around for pay TV — one of the highest would require every man, woman and child to watch 25 games a year, which makes

emigration an attractive option — and you have a disaster waiting to happen.

Most tellingly, the current football hysteria is driven by fashion, and a combination of unrelated events — last summer's Euro 96, which England, incidentally, failed to win, the odd best-selling book, and one of those self-reinforcing media feeding frenzies that always stops dead when a new fad emerges.

Investing in fashion has always been an easy way to lose money, from the hula hoop to the trendy but loss-making media or leisure conglomerates of today. You have been warned.

Empire-building with the Woolwich
WHEN Peter Robinson left the Woolwich last year after allegations that he misused company facilities during his brief spell as chief executive, the future of the society looked shaky and predators arrived immediately, notably the Prudential.



to conversion, making ambitious comments about acquisitions and warning hostile bidders not to bother unless they are prepared to pay a hefty premium. This is what any business would say in such circumstances. But the Woolwich's half-year figures were better than some had expected, and the approaches dried up after they were published, while that premium presumably rose.

A further recovery for the housing market can only push it higher, as the society depends on people wanting to spend and borrow. That recovery looks certain, double-digit house price inflation is expected this year — even if 50 per cent over the next three years, according to a well-

leaked forecast from Savills due today, looks over-optimistic.

When the Woolwich first decided to convert, the society considered merging with a fellow building society such as Northern Rock, to pander to the fashion for financial services groups as huge one-stop shops.

The Building Societies Bill, which penalises newly converted societies that turn acquisitive by removing their own five-year protection from hostile takeovers, made directors reconsider. It may decide, in the end, that it is willing to take the risk and go ahead with a spending spree anyway.

Penny of institutions, many overseas, would like to have greater exposure to the UK financial services market. If Woolwich were to buy a mutual life insurer to provide the pensions products that it lacks at present, it would become even more attractive to any purchaser. So here is a final thought. Angela Knight's much-derided legislation accelerated the arrival of all those fat bonuses because a merger would have taken years to finalise before any

floatation could take place. And Woolwich members who hang onto their shares could well be in for a second windfall.

Cautionary tale of troubled trio
TWELFTH NIGHT, and a good day for clearing away the rubbish from 1996. Costain saw the final removal of small investors from the running of the company; Wickes cleared the way for its shares to be quoted again.

Neither was a good advert for popular capitalism. Costain was hopelessly mismanaged; the shares' long decline had been well signalled, but it took five dividend-free years and three expensive rights issues to bring the company to this state, rather a long period for the normal flow of funds from company to investors to be reversed. Wickes was the fault of fraud and of the auditors appointed to prevent it, although shareholders, of course, paid the price.

The third of the class of 1996 (failed), and the worst, has been overlooked. This was the collapse, only two years after the finest minds in the City sanctioned the business for floatation, of Chamberlain Phipps. There were doubts expressed over the float, and the dominant role played by Dan Sullivan, the chairman and chief executive. Within a year, the business was in chaos.

Chamberlain Phipps came to the market with a value of £74 million. When it collapsed, in August, the company was worth minus £50 million, the size of the debt. In other words, 20 months' worth of turnover disappeared in 24 months. And nobody noticed.

The remaining businesses should be sold by the spring, but none of the proceeds will go to shareholders. One final irony: the plug was pulled on this footwear maker, before the winter season, because of the weather. It was too good.

The rights result
THE disaster that has befallen the Azlan rights issue — an issue that was never going to be popular with investors — has its positive side. The company has the money anyway. The buyers' strike suggests institutions are becoming more cautious with their money — that is, yours and mine — despite the City old-pals' act that is supposed to ensure such disasters never happen.

Raytheon victory aids US defence shake-up

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

THE RAPID consolidation of the US defence industry took another significant step forward yesterday with the \$3 billion purchase by Raytheon of the weapons division of Texas Instruments.

The cash deal is Raytheon's third purchase of a defence company in the past two years and beat a rival offer from Northrop Grumman, another defence company.

The Texas Instruments division, which was put up for sale last year, employs 12,000 people and is expected to have revenues of \$1.8 billion in 1996. It supplies precision-guided missiles, airborne radar and other electronic warfare systems.

Raytheon, the largest defence contractor in the world, is expected to complete the acquisition, which is likely to be completed by the middle of this year, was not expected to dilute its earnings.

Decanis Picard, Raytheon's chairman, said: "We are buying a growing world-class business that competes successfully in several key defence electronics markets where Raytheon is not a significant participant."

The purchase will boost Raytheon's total annual revenues to about \$15 billion. Analysts speculated that the purchase was designed to help Raytheon's bid for Hughes Electronics, the defence arm of General Motors, which is expected to cost about \$9 billion.

The Hughes bidding is expected to be decided in the next few days, and may determine the final shape of the US defence industry. If Raytheon wins that, as well as taking control of the TI defence division, it will have pulled far ahead of Northrop, which will be left in a weak position in the newly consolidated industry.

To strengthen its position, Raytheon has been involved in a dash for growth over the past two years, buying E-Systems for \$2.3 billion in 1995 and Chrysler's defence electronics business for \$475 million last year.

Knickerbox poised for restructuring

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

KNICKERBOX, the loss-making niche underwear retailer, is set for a management overhaul and £2.7 million restructuring after a deterioration in sales in the run-up to Christmas.

Gieves Group, which owns 49.5 per cent of Knickerbox, said the problems there, and disappointing pre-Christmas trading at Gieves & Hawkes, will have a "materially adverse" effect on group results.

After the conversion of the loan stock and the exercise of warrants, Gieves shareholding would fall to 38.91 per cent.

Apple is bruised by profit warning

Sears left with just 100 shops

SEARS has sold 210 of the stores it received back when Stephen Hinchcliffe's Facia empire collapsed in May, and it is close to disposing of another 63 (Jason Nisse writes).

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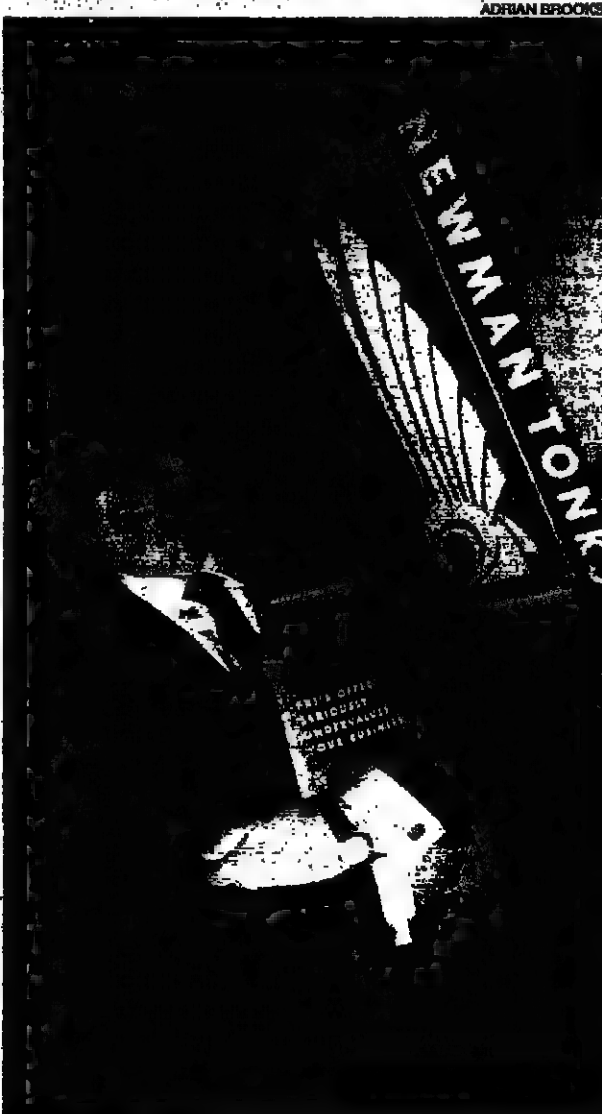
TT 71/97

Newman Tonks attacks FKI's record overseas

By PAUL DORMAN

NEWMAN TONKS, the door fittings group contesting a £196 million takeover bid from FKI, yesterday attacked the bidding company's "impressive" record of managing its overseas businesses.

In a defence document to shareholders, Newman Tonks said FKI's profits outside the UK and the US had fallen from £5.6 million to £2 million since 1992. The profit margins on these businesses had fallen from 8 to 1.7 per cent, and the return on assets from 27.6 to 7.2 per cent.



Geoff Gahan with document contesting FKI bid

Jeff Whalley, FKI's chairman, dismissed this and Newman Tonks' other criticisms as "pretty thin". FKI makes most of its money in North America, has increased profits in each of the past five years, and is this year heading for a total of more than £100 million, Mr Whalley said.

"They're struggling hard to find something to defend themselves with," he added. The defence document also discloses that Geoff Gahan, Newman Tonks' chief executive, and his fellow directors signed new two-year contracts only days before FKI's approach was made public. However, Newman Tonks said it had satisfied the Takeover Panel that the new contracts had been agreed in principle some months previously. Mr Gahan is on a basic salary of £194,000, and may receive half as much again as a bonus.

Record sales for Orange and One 2 One

By PAUL DORMAN

ORANGE and One 2 One, the mobile telephone companies, reported record quarterly sales figures yesterday, boosting the sector's share prices.

Orange said it added 125,000 new customers in the final quarter of 1996, an improvement on 116,000 the year before. It ended the year with more than 785,000 subscribers, 406,000 more than a year ago.

One 2 One, the smallest of the four mobile phone companies, attracted 85,000 new customers in the quarter, compared with 35,000 in the final quarter of 1995. This lifted its total to 545,000. It began 1996 with 375,000 subscribers.

The share prices of Orange, Vodafone and Cable & Wireless, the company that created One 2 One, were under pressure in the second half of 1996 because of fears that growth in sales of mobile phones was slowing. Robert Millington, BZW analyst, said the industry's fourth-quarter figures were the only set to show an improvement over 1995.

Orange shares closed 5p up at 193p, and Cable & Wireless 5p higher at 472p. Vodafone rose 7p to 251p and Securitor, which owns a large stake in Celfnet, edged 1p up to 178p.

Orange says it now has 11.5 per cent of the mobile phone market. Its share of net growth of the market is 29 per cent.

SFA ponders next step on Barings

By ROBERT MILLER
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR executives of the City watchdog still pressing charges against certain former officials of Barings meet today to discuss the remaining disciplinary cases.

Top of the agenda for members of the enforcement committee of the Securities and Futures Authority, the regulator for fund managers, are the largely failed prosecutions of Ron Baker and Mary Walz. None of the parties involved is expected to appeal against the findings of the SFA's independent tribunal, and the committee,

headed by Rod Sinclair, is likely to sanction announcement of the Baker and Walz settlements later this week.

Mr Baker and Ms Walz, who unsuccessfully sued Barings for her £500,000 bonus, faced a series of SFA charges relating to supervision of Nick Leeson, the rogue trader whose dealings on Far East money markets caused the £830 million collapse of Barings almost two years ago.

In November the SFA's independent tribunal found in Mr Baker's favour on four of the five charges against him, and, on the fifth, handed down a public reprimand and levied costs of £7,500.

City Diary, page 27

THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

To be or
not to be

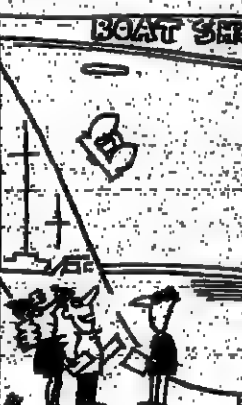
SO, THE executive directors at the Woolwich Building Society have agreed to waive any conditions that they may have as qualifying employees, but what of Peter Robinson? Whether the estranged chief executive, now an adviser to Direct Line, is a qualifying investor or borrowing member remains a moot point.

Persistent Cook

METAL-BASHING and poetry are not obvious bedfellows. But flicking through the company profile for William Cook, I stand corrected. Underneath a picture of Andrew Cook, chief executive of the steel castings group, is a quote from Calvin Coolidge, the former US president. Fighting off a hostile bid from Triplex Lloyd, here is a taste of *The Cook Guiding Principles*. "Press on. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent, without it, is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius, without it, is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination are omnipotent."

Family backing

WITH talk of family values at fever pitch, spare a thought for the Hopkinson. As the SRA disciplinary committee gathers today to decide the fate of *Barings*, 140 "family-owned" companies have the backing of the bank. Valerie and two children, endured of *Barings* to Treasury Select Committee evidence.



THE deadline for applications for the Spoken Business Awards is January 13. Open to business executives resident in any EU country, the first prize is a return ticket to Japan, and £1,500 cash.

Art form

AN UNEXPECTED name crops up alongside that of Sir Nicholas Goodison on the committee of the National Art Collections Fund. David Land, chairman of the Loot Group, and the brain behind the hugely successful free ads paper. The Italian entrepreneur turns out to be an expert on Renaissance prints. With Rupert Hambro also on the committee, it appears that Land has hit upon a new venture. "It's a shame we don't have a section in the paper selling second-hand directorships," he chuckles.

Driving force

NEWS that Henderson Investments, the independent fund manager, is to sponsor the Williams Formula One grand prix racing team will have come as no surprise to Jonathan Berry, its Pepsi administrator. Berry is an avid racing fan and brother-in-law of Frank Williams, managing director of Williams Grand Prix Engineering.

GOOD news for fat cats. The Water Services Association, which represents the nine largest privatised water companies, is the chief sponsor behind Egon Ronay's guide to bistros, bars and cafes.

MORAG PRESTON



Sandy Anderson made £36 million when the market valued Porterbrook at some £300m more than the price at which the Government sold it

What price value aboard the privatisation express?

Fraser Nelson on the men who may come to be known as fat-cat controllers

Railways, which once vied with nuclear fuel as being the least attractive asset on the public auction block, are taking their place among the market's wonder stocks. GB Railways, which more than doubled in value on its market debut yesterday, is the second pure railway company to come to the market. It did so after picking up the Anglia rail franchise, and shareholders, who have collectively enjoyed an instant paper profit of £9.67 million, are looking forward to further profits if the company wins the Thameslink franchise as well.

Of the 25 rail routes that were part of the £44-billion privatisation, 18 have been allocated and ten have become quoted companies. Offers for the seven remaining lines close this month, and the last sale — of InterCity West Coast — will be made by the end of March. The rail industry's journey from the state to the market is on course to be completed in little more than three years.

On the face of it, this should give the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRF), which is running the auction, grounds for self-congratulation. Railways, it says, have long suffered from a lack of investment; private companies are keen to make. Not only do the new rail routes take a loss-making company off the hands of the state, they promise to pour millions into new trains, with a more frequent service and cheaper fares. It is, the argument goes, good for the passenger, good for the Government, good for Britain.

But as the directors of GB Railways toast the instant £2.07 million paper profit they made in less than an hour, questions are being asked about whether the assets are being transferred too cheaply to the private sector. Either their new owners are working such magic that their value has shot up in a matter of months, or they picked up the goods for a song.

GB Railways's market surge came on the day the National Audit Office revealed that it is looking into the sale of Porterbrook, the rail coaches leasing company. Sold to its management as a debt-ridden liability for £57 million this time last year, Porterbrook was bought, seven months later, by Stagecoach for £825 million. This left a handsome £300 million for the buyout.

investors to share, and made eight days' work worth £36 million to Sandy Anderson, managing director, and £4 million to Peter Watson, chairman.

As the National Audit Office begins its investigation, the Government's claim that rail companies are cash-draining liabilities is beginning to lose ground very quickly. To miss out on £300 million of what should have been taxpayers' money suggests that the Government was, at best, guilty of bad timing, and, at worst, gross commercial naivety.

The Government argues that the price at which it sold Porterbrook reflected the risk it was passing on. But its valuation of that risk is at great variance to the market's view. The National Audit Office is also expected to look into whether similar miscalculations marked the sales of Angel Trains Contracts and Eversholt Leasing.

Rail franchises, by contrast, are awarded on a seven-year basis, and their owners are also paid by OPRF. GB Railways is being paid a £38.9 million subsidy in its first year, and has since raised £6.8 million from coming to the City. OPRF shrugs its shoulders.

It says its job is merely to arrange a suitor for its franchisees, secure investment pledges, and wish good luck to the directors if they can become millionaires thereafter. It is not actually selling anything, and can hardly demand a better price.

The market, meanwhile, is getting very excited. Richard Hannah, transport analyst at UBS, says that the City sees far more value in rail companies than the Government has envisaged.

He says: "Given the years of poor management under public ownership, the potential of these companies under private sector management is substantial. At the moment, rail accounts for about 5 per cent of passenger miles, which is amazingly low. The private sector has done a great job on sorting out transport companies which were underperforming under state ownership, and there is no reason to believe that rail will be any exception."

Mr Hannah attributes the missing millions — now being pocketed by the new franchise holders — to the difference in opinion between the Government and the City as to the value of the franchises. "The balance is in the favour of the rail companies at the

moment but this may well change: there may be unforeseen circumstances which prevent the potential being realised," he said.

The management manoeuvres of the new franchise holders do little to contradict his argument. Midland Main Line, owned by National Express, is offering free coffee to all its customers, a break from the exorbitant buffet bar fares of old. Great North Eastern Railways, which runs the service between London and Edinburgh, offers a £19 return fare, to combat airline fares of £58.

Another imaginative newcomer to railways is Richard Branson, whose Virgin Rail Group started running the Cross Country trains franchise yesterday. Mr Branson wants to add aircraft-style mini televisions to passenger seats, an innovation few civil servants would have agreed to in the years of state control. The results are already beginning to show. National Express has started offering £29 family tickets on the London to Sheffield line, and has seen the number of weekly passengers grow from 13,500 to 16,000. Railtrack, which runs the stations, has attracted coffee shops, sold its advertising space, and seen its shares shoot from 38p to 59p.

It seems that not even the prospect of a Labour government will quell the market's enthusiasm for railways. A Blair election victory and the possibility of subsequent deregulation is the last liability that the new railway companies could face. The City take the view that Labour believes that the worst offence already been committed — that of selling public assets for a song.

As the nation enjoys its £19 returns to Scotland, free coffees and perhaps even in-train television, the consensus is that Labour would conclude that it had come to power too late to reverse all of that, and that the wisest policy would be to let the private market baffle it out for customers.

Only now is the market's enthusiasm for railway stocks beginning to be fully apparent. With that, the gulf between what the Government sold its railway franchises for and what they now appear to be worth is on track to dwarf the £300 million lost in the sale of Porterbrook.



Richard Branson would have TVs on his Cross Country trains

BUSINESS LETTERS

Wisdom lacking among those who sold utilities to aliens

From Mrs Joan Woolard
Sir, Further to reports of GKN's \$400 million suit relating to its American subsidiary, Metekco, what protection is available to the British customers and shareholders of privatised British utilities with financial strings in the United States? In the event of a similar suit being brought against an American subsidiary or owner of a British utility, who will pay? Will British customers have services cut off due to some financial embarrassment on the other side of the Atlantic?

There is also the possibility of litigation against HM ministers at some future date, or HMG generally, by an American litigant or class action suit arising from mistakes made abroad but originating in Whitehall.

It is probably too late to consider the wisdom of American regulation forbidding the sale of American utilities to aliens. Would that our "wise men" had so much foresight. Yours faithfully, JOAN WOOLARD, 35 Eastgate, Fleet Harrogate, Lincolnshire.

No sympathy for same old Lloyd's

From Sir Guy Millard
Sir, You reported on December 19 that Lloyd's of London is going to court to recover outstanding funds from non-paying names. The case would perhaps be more deserving if Lloyd's had fulfilled its own obligations. Lloyd's has so far failed to pay out so-called Finality Surpluses owed to large numbers of names, perhaps thousands, under the terms of the settlement offer. These were due, at the very latest, at the beginning of December. No word of explanation has been offered for the delay, and the authorities at Lloyd's apparently do not think that it matters. Now the names have done what was required of them by voting for the reconstruction of Lloyd's and Equitas, it seems that Lloyd's no longer cares about them. It looks as though the new Lloyd's is going to be just like the old, only perhaps more so. Yours faithfully, GUY MILLARD, Fyfield Manor, Southrop, Gloucestershire.

The payment of fraudulent insurance claims

From E. J. Smith
Sir, Mr Piero Chiodo tells us (Business Letters, December 25) that in the year before last fraudulent insurance claims totalled some £580 million. He goes on to say that, as a result, honest policyholders are paying extra premium. There is what seems an interesting paradox here: if the claims can be identified, as the total figure suggests, then why are they paid, being fraudulent, at the expense of innocent policyholders. It would be really interesting to know how the insurers

arrive at the figure of £580 million. Is it a guessimate or do the companies actually tot up the fraudulent claims they have paid? Yours faithfully, E. J. SMITH, 14 The Fairway, Camberley, Surrey.

Inflexibility surrounding the Halifax Building Society flotation

From Mr Colin Dennison
Sir, Pennington comments (December 17) on Halifax's "revolving door" solution to members wanting cash up-front. If Halifax listen to you, it will be remarkable I could not even get them to take on board my wish to relinquish my entitlement to shares in favour of my wife.

Several times I have explained to them that where a wife is younger and in better health, it makes more sense for long-term assets such as shares to continue in the name of the one with better expectation of life. All the Halifax would do in response was to refuse the facility, reciting what was obvious already, that the shares would be marketable and could be sold/given in stock exchange trading. Not really good for small quantities.

If Halifax do accept your suggestion, I will have one more go with mine. Yours sincerely, COLIN DENNISON, 8 Sheuchan View, Stranraer. From Mr R. H. Myddelton
Sir, You report (December 20) that the Halifax has been refused permission by the Building Societies Commission to send its nine million investors

and borrowers an abbreviated version of its 150-page transfer document. Of course, the full document should be available on request, but who can seriously believe that any useful purpose is served by sending it to everyone? There may well be historic wording in legislation and regulation which seems to require such absurd decisions. But why cannot the Deregulation Task Force find a way to provide a discretion in such cases, and ensure that it is exercised sensibly? Yours faithfully, R. H. MYDDELTON, 21 Lawford Road, NWS.

and will go on gaining for ever more. I would go further than saying let us get on with converting to the common currency for Europe as quickly as possible. I would say let us have a world currency in the near future — the dollar. Do I hear screams from the City? Yours faithfully, D. POOL, 16 Hordle Street, Harwich, Essex.

Opt for the dollar

From D. Pool
Sir, Your article "Euro will cost banks \$70n a year" (December 16) is very revealing. Let us have many more items of a similar nature to prepare us for the referendum that begins to seem more and more certain on the subject of the common currency. First of all, the article says the banks will

lose large amounts of revenue because they will no longer be able to charge the public and business for the countless currency transactions that occur every day.

To my mind, on that score the euro cannot come soon enough. After all, going back to basics as Mr Major would have us do, the role of the banks should surely be to facilitate currency transactions, not make a bomb out of them. What the banks lose, the public and business will gain.

The article says that the cost to the EU of converting machinery and systems will nullify six years worth of cost savings. So there will be six years of opportunities for the software and computer industry then. After that everyone in the EU will gain by the increased business efficiency



Fresh thinking and the deficit

There are just three things wrong with the economic outlook for Britain in 1997 and beyond. First and foremost there is the threat that the pound will continue to strengthen, pushed up by the clamour for higher interest rates from the Bank of England. Secondly, there is the reason the Bank's demand for tighter monetary policy will be justified. Spending in Britain is growing substantially faster than output, even though I suspect that official figures will show Christmas sales to have been less buoyant than many experts thought. If spending continues to outpace production, inflation and an unsustainable trade gap are bound to result, even if the pressures take several years to build up.

The third economic problem is the Government's budget deficit. This remains too high in spite of the commendable efforts by Kenneth Clarke in November's Budget. The Treasury's projection of a deficit of 2.5 per cent of gross domestic product in 1997-98 would be on the high side for the fifth year of an economic expansion, even if it were totally credible. Lower deficits are desirable in the long term because the cost of servicing the national debt is the first charge against government tax revenues. It therefore crowds out public spending on more worthwhile front-line services such as education, health and law enforcement.

A more urgent reason for reducing the deficit is to restrain spending and, therefore, the inflationary risks. A tighter fiscal policy would counteract some of the upward pressure on interest rates and the pound. The link between all three of these key economic problems should now be clear. If the next Government dramatically reduced the deficit immediately after the general election it could quickly subside inflation, reassure the Bank of England, avert a sharp increase in interest rates and avoid an further damaging appreciation of the pound.

Until recently, such a happy sequence of events seemed inconceivable. Both parties, I assumed, would be so bound up by electoral promises that any increase in taxes would be impossible. The hopes of significant cuts in public spending beyond those already assumed by the Treasury seemed even more forlorn, particularly after the pledges to improve popular public services that both main parties would surely make.

However, I have begun to have second thoughts after Mr Clarke's Budget and publication of the detailed Finance Bill. The Budget showed an unexpected flowering of imagination at the Treasury. Instead of just going for the "usual suspects" higher rates of VAT and national insurance and lower personal allowances, the mandarins focused their attention on the many loopholes and abuses that riddle the tax system. The Finance Bill showed an equal seriousness at the Inland Revenue and the Customs and Excise in tackling elaborate avoidance schemes that cost the Exchequer many billions of pounds. The possibility raised by this unexpected outbreak of lateral thinking is that budget deficits could, after all, be reduced substantially by the next Government. The politicians will doubtless pledge to keep their grubby hands off income tax, VAT and national insurance, but this would still leave a plethora of opportunities to expand the tax base. The last Budget, which raised an additional £4 billion annually in "low-visibility" taxes, offered only a hint of what a determined Chancellor could achieve.

Just one reform — the abolition of the dividend imputation system that subsidises British pension funds and encourages UK companies to pay out dividends instead of reinvesting profits — could raise up to £5 billion a year. A second obvious reform — the removal of mortgage tax relief — would yield more than £3 billion and would come at the perfect time to dampen an incipient house price boom. A third useful measure would be simply to accelerate the phasing out of profit related pay. Between them, such seemingly technical changes could transform the next Government's fiscal position, as well as the outlook for interest rates and the pound.

The Budget showed an unexpected flowering of imagination by Treasury mandarins

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Shares higher in sluggish trade

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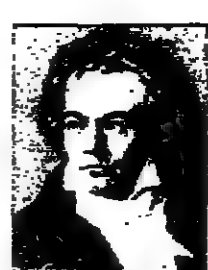
Dumping the Coliseum: would English National Opera be right to quit its famous home?



■ CONCERT 1

Anthony Payne's *A Sea Change* is one of the featured works in the Brunel Ensemble's London recital

THE TIMES
ARTS



■ CONCERT 2

The Carmina Quartet bring their rare yet elusive musicianship to three Beethoven string quartets



■ TOMORROW

Hot tickets: *Times* critics look ahead to what's coming up in film, theatre, music, dance and visual art

ENO decides on a change of scene

Less than five years after securing its future at the Coliseum, English National Opera is to sell up and move. Richard Morrison discovers why

The decision was not unexpected, but it will be no less disappointing to English National Opera's loyal patrons for that. Yesterday ENO announced that it is planning to quit the London Coliseum, its home for the past 29 years, and build a new opera house. Eight possible sites have been named, none of them in the West End.

ENO would ideally like the new theatre to have two auditoriums, seating about 2,100 and 900 people respectively. It will submit a lottery application to cover the bulk of the cost, estimated at between £80 million and £120 million, and hold an architectural competition to decide the design. If the scheme progresses without any of the hitches traditionally associated with opera house building projects, the company could be inaugurating its new home as early as September 2001.

Dance companies — large and small, British and foreign — would be invited to share the new performing facilities with the opera company. Indeed, the larger auditorium would be designed with the dual purpose of providing London belatedly with a house for large-scale dance.

Meanwhile, the 93-year-old Coliseum, bought for £12 million from Stoll Moss Theatres to house ENO less than five years ago, would be sold to the private sector again, and probably become the prime West End venue for long-running musicals. Several commercial managers have apparently already indicated to ENO that they would be interested in acquiring Frank

Mitcham's grandest theatre. ENO's board made its decision to abandon the Coliseum after studying a 300-page "feasibility study", itself funded by the lottery, by a group of management and theatre consultants, architects and market researchers. "At the outset, many board members believed that we should remain in the Coliseum," says John Baker, ENO's chairman. "But the logic of moving to a new theatre is compelling."

'To make the place work, 560 people bang their heads against a brick wall'

So what is that logic? The limitations of the Coliseum as the home of an opera company have long been apparent. It was never designed as a theatre that could juggle up to four different productions in repertoire at the same time. It has virtually no storage areas backstage for sets, and its Edwardian hydraulics rely heavily on teams of well-muscular stagehands working in shifts round the clock.

"This is the hardest-working theatre in the country, which is one reason why it is falling apart," says Dennis Marks, ENO's general director. "To make the place work as an

opera house 560 people have to bang their heads against a brick wall for 300 days a year. They do make it work: the feat of staging *Die Soldaten* this season showed that. But there comes a point when the feeling of permanent stridulation exceeds the rewards."

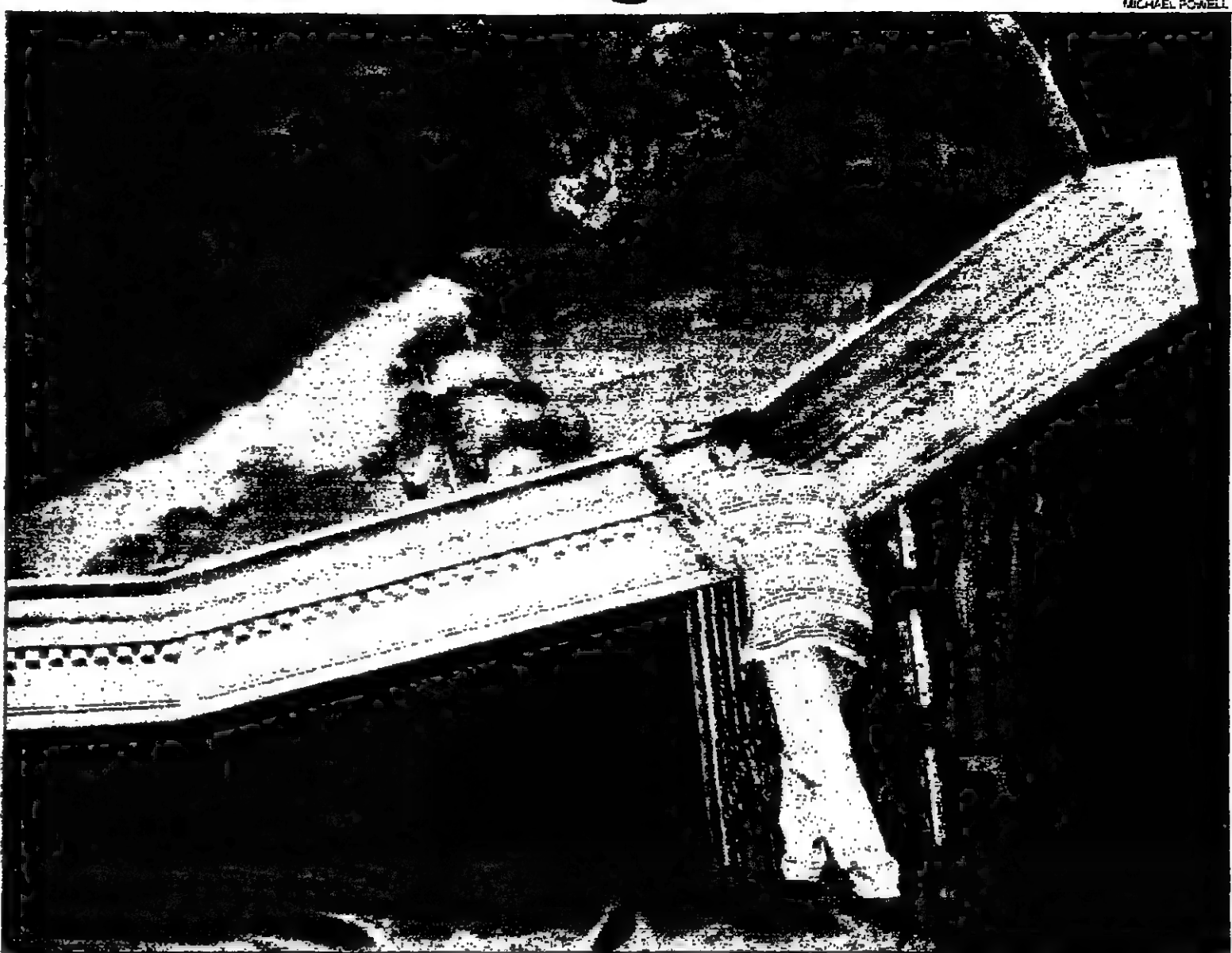
Unlike the Royal Opera House, however, the Coliseum cannot be redeveloped on its adjacent land: it is locked in by roads, alleys and surrounding buildings. So there is no chance of building what most big modern opera houses have: parallel stages for rehearsal and for storage of sets. Nor can it expand downwards: an underground stream already supplies more than enough winter floods.

Nevertheless, after ENO acquired the Coliseum freehold in 1992 it did commission the architect Sheppard Robson to devise a redevelopment. This would have provided greatly improved foyers and other front-of-house facilities, and done something to modernise the stage and meet essential health-and-safety requirements. On this basis, ENO drafted a lottery bid.

"It was a very ingenious scheme," Marks says. "But at the end of the day the company was still spread over six separate sites across London. It still didn't have an in-house rehearsal stage. It was still tied to 650 scenery shifts by hand each year. And the estimate for all this was around £30 million, plus perhaps £20 million to cover relocation costs during two years of rebuilding. I did not feel we could justify a lottery bid on this basis. We decided we had to commission a comparative study."

Cynics will find it unsurprising that the resulting feasibility study supports Marks's preference for a new opera house. But the report also notes that, although London has many huge lottery-funded redevelopments under way, there is no big new building commissioned. "I find it extraordinary that London is approaching the millennium without a single completely new architectural project," Marks says.

However, the report is less enthusiastic about ENO's idea of having a new opera house with an additional smaller auditorium attached. It points out that "the option that reduces risk to ENO, costs less money and raises the least number of managerial issues for ENO is the single auditorium solution". The report sug-



"The limitations of the Coliseum have long been apparent... its Edwardian hydraulics rely heavily on teams of stagehands working round the clock"

gests that ENO put its small-scale and contemporary work "at another venue, in all probability Sadler's Wells", pointing out that "it provides good business for another Arts Council lottery client, and makes good sense in terms of cost-effective use of lyric theatre facilities".

But what about the risk of taking ENO out of the West End? St Martin's Lane buzzes every night, as the crowds flood out of theatres, cafés, restaurants and cinemas. It is hard to imagine ENO enjoying this kind of atmosphere in Vauxhall, or somewhere "north of St Pancras". Marks talks grandly of how a new cultural institution can "lead an urban regeneration, just as the Lincoln Centre did in New York's Upper West Side, or the Sydney Opera House did in a rundown harbour area". But there must be a risk that the urban regeneration simply won't happen, leaving ENO stranded in an area that obstinately

retains a woefully unlyrical ambience. Today, however, ENO's patrons may be puzzling over a different question: why did ENO eagerly accept the freehold of the Coliseum in 1992 — and with it the perpetually draining obligation to secure and improve the fabric of the

theatre, front and back of house? — if the old place was so unsuited to its needs? Marks (who had not joined ENO in 1992) points out that "first, the lease was going to run out in 1997, so the freehold had to be bought to secure ENO's future; and second, there was no lottery in 1992, so

there was no point even in thinking about a new theatre." He compares ENO's current resolve to move to new premises with the National Theatre's determination in the 1960s. "The Old Vic is much loved, just as the Coliseum is, but it was never going to accommodate the kind of Nat-

ional Theatre that people wanted to create," Marks says. "With Paul Daniel coming as our music director, ENO will be ever more committed to developing singers, audiences and repertoire of the future. I don't think this vision is best served by a palace of varieties that is almost a century old."

ENGLISH National Opera has named eight possible "central London" locations that might be suitable for its new opera house. They are:

- Hungerford Car Park/Jubilee Gardens, South Bank
- Coin Street, South Bank
- New Riverhead, Rosebery Avenue, Islington
- King's Cross redevelopment area
- North of new British Library, St Pancras
- Potters Field, Southwark
- St Christopher's House, Bankside
- Ebbw site, Vauxhall

The company will not reveal which are its preferred sites. "There are some very delicate negotiations going on with a number of sites, involving the owners, the local authorities and government departments, and these are best not conducted in public," Marks says.

It expects to choose a site and an architect within the next 12 months. A lottery application would then be lodged during 1998. Building work would take two years, meaning that ENO would remain at the Coliseum until at least 2001.

LONDON RECITALS: Youthful exuberance in new music and Beethoven Class of '97 looks to the future

TWO things combine to make the Park Lane Group's New Year series of Young Artists Concerts something special. The first is the exceptionally high level of accomplishment displayed by each annual crop of young performers, carefully auditioned and groomed as they are. The second is the unflagging commitment to music of our time.

This year's featured composer is Anthony Payne, and although lack of funds regrettably prevented the usual PLG commission, three past commissions (including one from Payne) are to be heard again this year, and there will be 15 premieres, including five new works composed for the series. The opening concert by the

Brunel Ensemble on Sunday, optimised the twin virtues of the series. Not only is the Ensemble, founded in 1992, packed with fine musicians, but their enthusiasm for challenging contemporary music shines through.

The programme began with Julian Anderson's *Khorovod* in a performance of barbaric exuberance — suitably enough, since the Russian folk dances invoked are in themselves unashamedly earthy. The players were kept on their toes — not least the two percussionists who displayed nimble footwork — and Christopher Austin's direction main-

PLG Young Artists
Purcell Room

tained the momentum well.

Anthony Payne's *A Sea Change* provided

its delicate filigree textures, drawing sensitive playing from a reduced ensemble, in particular flute and clarinet. Precision of ensemble and tuning were tested both here and in Elisabeth Lutyens's *Six Bagatelles*, where the often spare quality of the writing draws attention to such matters. The Brunel passed the test with flying colours.

A new work by Morgan Hayes, titled *Viscid*, aptly conjured textures that were syrupy yet with the potential to evolve. The piece builds

effectively to a menacing climax before its unpredictable quiet end. The Ensemble was as impressive here as in Richard Rodney Bennett's *Book of Hours*, though the more conventional idiom of the latter once or twice highlighted imperceptible innovation. With the short fantasy drawn by John Woolrich from his 1996 chamber opera *In the House of Crossed Desires*, the return was made to the sphere of the grotesque, with chiming clocks, crashing pots and pans, braying clarinets and growling tuba. Conductor and ensemble entered fully into the spirit of the piece.

BARRY MILLINGTON

The puzzle solvers

Carmina Quartet
Wigmore Hall

First Beethoven ever wrote, the players teased out the enigmas posed by the little opening sigh, as it metamorphoses throughout the first movement. Their way was to play with a quietness and closeness of ensemble, with minimum vibrato and short, neat chording, which drew the listener in more deeply than any more highly charged playing could have done. By the finale it had lifted off into a true Presto so technically ballasted that it had no fear of the most dizzying of flights.

Unease was more acute in the biting discord which began the C major *Rosamovsky Quartet*. The Carmina, with its fine sense of timing, kept its audience as tense with expectation as if it had never heard the work before. The slow movement was no less special. Led by Matthias Enderle's dark, resinous first violin, the players seemed transformed into ghostly figures caught in an unending and timeless round dance, to the numb pizzicato pulse of Stephan Goerner's cello.

The Quartet in A minor, Op 132, seemed to sum up all that had gone before. The Carmina's best attributes — its supple democracy of ensemble, its incisiveness, and a blending of voices subtle enough for Renaissance polyphony — all fused to recreate Beethoven's great *Heiliger Dankgesang*, a "Sacred song of thanks from a convalescent to the Godhead" in which one member of the audience at least could share.

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Michael Flatley returns to London with *Lord of the Dance*

VENUE: Tonight at Wembley Arena

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE 3

The Cliff Richard musical juggernaut *Heathcliff* hits Manchester

VENUE: Tonight at the Palace Theatre



MUSIC

The great Spanish tenor Alfredo Kraus lends his voice to a singing competition in the Canary Islands

LONDON

THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN Nicholas Hytner directs the second play by award-winning author Martin McDonagh. Rudest of the two plays, the 18-year-old, young on the remote island of Inishmaan, who dreams of stardom in Hollywood director Robert Flaherty's latest film *The Immigrant*. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (0171-428 2252). Opens tonight, 7pm.

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MUSIC: Alfredo Kraus joins winners of the prize named after him; plus a compact *Traviata*

Giving Canaries a voice

In Las Palmas, not far from the Perez Galdos Theatre, built in the early years of the century, a blue plaque marks the birthplace of Alfredo Kraus. For 30 years the great Spanish tenor has been the most famous citizen of the Canary Islands, and their leading musical export. Since 1990 he has been president of the jury in the biennial singing competition in the Perez Galdos. Recently, for the first time, he gave it his voice as well as his name.

The competitors were lured not only by two first prizes of £7,500 each but also by the possibility of singing operatic duets with Kraus at a gala with the Filarmónica de Gran Canaria. It makes a change from the masterclasses which usually follow such events. And, with television cameras in attendance, the publicity value was obvious. The success of the Cardiff Singer of the World competition has shown that exposure to a wide audience is what makes the agents come running with contracts.

The jury might well have been looking for a lyric tenor to carry on the Kraus tradition. If so, they were disappointed. The two finalists in this category, both Koreans, picked up no prizes. In a remarkable show of unanimity, the jury, audience and a handful of attendant critics all gave their vote to Felipe Bou, a bass brought up in Brazil and now working in Spain.

This did cause a problem: suitable operatic duets for tenor and bass are very thin on the ground. So instead Bou got a solo spot and proved, with *Il lacerato spirito* from *Simon Boccanegra*, that he is a Verdian of potential. Two days earlier he had belted out his rivals with more Verdi, *Elia giannina* from *Don Carlo*, sung at the jury's special request.

To take on, at the age of 28, two such troubled, elderly gentlemen as Fiesco and Philip II of Spain shows considerable maturity. But Bou is already a veteran of several operatic competitions and it showed in his composure on stage and his handling of words. His real quality stems from the evenness of his tone and an effortless lower register.

OPERA in its full glory may be hideously expensive to mount, but over the past decade Travelling Opera has shown that, by choosing wisely, it is possible to put on a creditable imitation of the original at a fraction of the cost. Verdi's *Aida*, with its massed ranks of soldiers and slaves, might tax the ingenuity even of Travelling Opera's founder-director, Peter Knapp, but the same composer's *La Traviata*, intimate and chamber-like in conception, does remarkably little when done by such reduced forces (13 singers and 11 instrumentalists).

As for the score, many of the characteristic sonories are retained in Richard Bal-



Helping hand: the great Spanish tenor Alfredo Kraus has lent his name to a prize for young opera singers

combe's arrangement, dominated by woodwind and strings. Knapp's travelling production of 1994, designed by Venetia Davan Weston, staged by the band alone to occupy the platform with the singers, the rapport was excellent. The standard of playing was also very high, and Alex Ingram's direction was clear and precise, with just enough flexibility to register fluctuating emotions.

Vocally it is a good company show, with little danger of any principal being eclipsed by star quality elsewhere.

over, he cuts a sympathetic figure. I particularly liked the way his reluctance to propose the toast at the beginning was clearly the result of shyness — no false modesty here.

His father, Germont, is played by Glenville Harcourt, a dignified and authoritative that do not exclude sympathy. His dramatic entry towards the end of Act II to denounce his son's conduct capitalised on his noble bearing and was accompanied by an effective lighting change (Paul J. Need) to an icy blue that froze the other characters on the spot.

Faultless technique plus the meticulous selection of a small number of roles and the careful rationing of his appearances are the reasons why Kraus is still in prime voice at an age when most singers are content with character parts. Kraus, who made his operatic debut exactly 40 years ago, has never accepted a supporting part. He is due to appear in concert with the Royal Opera in 1998. Watch for further

■ VISUAL ART 1

London sees the fruits of a new chapter in Anselm Kiefer's tortured exploration of German history

■ VISUAL ART 2

The photographer Charles Hoff's fascination with prize fighting is showcased in a new London show

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ VISUAL ART 3

How ArtSway, a small but important centre, is bringing new art to an unlikely setting in the New Forest

■ CD CHOICE

Georg Solti comes out on top in our survey of Humperdinck's fairytale opera *Hansel and Gretel*

VISUAL ART: Rebirth of a great German painter; bringing art to a rural area; plus the galleries round-up

Ploughing a new furrow

Five years ago Anselm Kiefer stopped painting. Richard Cork welcomes his confident return

Towards the end of 1991, Anselm Kiefer suddenly stopped making art. It seemed an astonishing decision for an energetic man who had produced so much powerful work over the previous two decades. At the same time, he left his native Germany and settled in the South of France. The move fuelled an anxious suspicion that Kiefer, whose art had been obsessed with his country's tragic history, was abandoning his principal source of inspiration.

Since he did not resume work for more than three years, the concern grew more acute. But now that Kiefer has started painting again, often on surfaces as monumental as before, his long period of abstinence appears less alarming. Confidently occupying the grandeur of the South London Gallery as well as large rooms at Anthony d'Offay's, the recent work adds up to a rebirth. These towering images suggest that Kiefer underwent a self-imposed exorcism, struggling to free himself from the traumas of the past in order to begin all over again.

Not that the new, purged artist is unrecognisable. The furrowed fields that played such a central role in former paintings reappear here, most notably in some titanic exhibits at the South London Gallery. But they are very different, in mood and composition alike, from the blackened, scorched, smoking earth he depicted before. Kiefer's earlier fields were arenas of wholesale devastation. They came to be seen

as symbols of Germany itself, still suffering from the annihilation and shame of the Nazi era. In the new images, though, fields are confined to the lower part of the canvas. Pales and more parched than their mixed forerunners, they are made subservient in every case to colossal areas of sky. The sense of release is palpable.

He can now regard the land as a haven for growth?

ble our eyes, liberated from terra firma, are allowed at last to wander across the immensity of space. And although the sky initially seems to be invaded by swarms of insects, the dark specks turn out to be real sunflower seeds glued to the picture surface. Whether floating upwards or descending like manna from the cosmos, they show that Kiefer is now permitting himself to regard the land as a haven for fresh growth and hope.

He also gives himself a prominent place in this awakening. Nearly 30 years ago, when Kiefer produced a disquieting series of self-portrait photographs, he wore a Nazi uniform and gave the *Hell Hitler* salute to mark the vicious occupation of prized locations across Europe. To

day, however, this guilty identification with the murderous lust for war has been replaced by a healing alternative. Instead of ironically glorifying in aggression, Kiefer represents himself as a semi-naked figure lying in a field of outstretched sunflowers. With bare arms placed calmly at his sides and legs together, he adopts the pose known in yoga as the *stavesana*. The uninhabited countryside and equally desolate hills in Kiefer's previous work have given way, here, to a more nurturing region where humanity can once again become visible.

However, there is nothing triumphant about this radically altered vision. Kiefer left Germany in the year of reunification, a momentous event that must have made him realise that his harrowing preoccupation with war was over. But the widespread elation that accompanied the dismantling of the Berlin Wall cannot be detected in his new paintings. Their optimism is qualified and hard-won. Compared with Van Gogh's sunflowers, emanating the heat of a Provencal summer, Kiefer's look ominously black.

So despite Kiefer's passionate belief in the prospect of renewal, he cannot escape from the past. Fresh life only seems possible if it springs from a sacrificial source. The man in a yonic trance appears to be offering himself, defensively, to the sunflowers. Near by, in a book filled with pages where oil and



Kiefer's *Ich hatte alle Indien in meiner Hand*, inspired by a 17th-century sonnet: "In the chilled sobriety of winter, global harmony is achieved"

emulsion have been applied to photo-collages sprinkled with ash, grass and wild plants grow over the remains of obliterated cities. Kiefer's involvement with the subject stems from his awareness that bombed German cities after the Second World War often ended up covered with natural growth.

A tough-minded duality lies at the centre of Kiefer's vision. It means that his new work, for all its emergent sense of promise, never lapses into wishful thinking. The sunflower seeds can still be seen

as a cloud of locusts. Without retaining a suggestion of their baleful presence, he finds a positive future impossible to imagine.

In some pictures, the corpse-like mediator is replaced by a vertical man. According to the title of one tall, narrow image, this balding and wispy bearded figure is Robert Fludd, the 16th-century physician and mystic philosopher best known for his influential *History of Both Worlds*. Unlike the tattered man lying amid the sunflowers, he is naked. And the connection

with Fludd indicates that Kiefer is exploring ideas about the microcosm of the individual nourished by the macrocosm of the universe.

Even here, though, at the height of his striving for an interconnected wholeness, he stops well short of bliss. Fludd, who can also be seen as a self-portrait of the artist, looks haggard as he hangs upside down among the drooping flowers. He appears to have risen from the earth with difficulty, and when the same male nude is placed the right way up among the continents

of the world he looks no less gaunt than before.

This time, the image takes its name from a line by the 17th-century Spanish poet Francisco de Quevedo. In his lyrical sonnet, *Portrait of Lisi which was Brought in a Ring*, the writer finds himself entranced by the burnished miniature and concludes ecstatically that "I hold all Indias in my hand". None of the shining, seductive colours in Quevedo's enchanting ring can be found in Kiefer's dour picture. Restricted to umber, sepia and pale grey, it has the

chilled sobriety of winter. But the lines dangling like loose reins from the man's hands eventually curl upwards, embracing all the land masses. Global harmony is achieved, even if the figure's haunted eyes still belong to someone who once stared straight into the heart of darkness.

Anselm Kiefer is at the South London Gallery (0171-803 6130) until Feb 9, and at Anthony d'Offay (0171-499 4100) until Feb 15. Richard Cork will chair a public discussion on Kiefer at the South London Gallery on Jan 15 at 6.30pm.

Cranking up the old Morris in the New Forest

Linda Blair on an arts centre which hopes to unite artists and community



Furniture by Rick Lawlor at ArtSway

SOMETHING new in art is stirring in the New Forest — that immensely desirable haven of ancient peace, trees and wild ponies. Despite the beauty of the area and the unsurprising number of professional artists who have always been drawn to it, until now there has been no local resource for art with a capital A. No gallery, study centre, academy. And out just in the immediate area, a 16,000 sq ft building, a rising fact, but in the whole area between Portsmouth and Reading. Though artists continue to find landscape subjects inspirational, arts centres tend to be confined to inner-city areas.

But now here is ArtSway, a small but significant centre for contemporary visual arts in the

village of Sway. Here up-and-coming young professional artists will be able to bounce ideas off their peers, rent studios, exhibit and sell their work, and involve the local community in workshops. William Morris would have approved.

At the centre of the project is the converted stable block of Whitbread's 1890s Forest Heath Hotel. To this has been added a new top-floor exhibition gallery, a landscaped sculpture garden, and a studio block, with all the building design work handled by the architect Tony Fretton.

As its director Linda Fredericks points out, ArtSway is very much a modern response to the current cultural, social and economic climate. All its usable space is

multipurpose, and wired up with subfloor ISDN lines, so it can display multimedia exhibits as well as conventional artwork.

An essential part of ArtSway's function as a resource for artists will also be to create a dialogue with everyone else. Fredericks says: "Artists are part of the community, but over the years they've come to be seen as separate. Now we want to put them back together. Not as teachers, but as the expressors of ideas they absorb from everyone and that everyone can appreciate."

The project started five years ago as the brainchild of a small group of artists, with Fredericks (an artist and resident herself) as the prime mover. Now it is a registered charity, a "partnership" between the artists and Southern Arts, Hampshire CC and New Forest DC. Last year it took off via an Arts Council lottery grant of £306,000, and additional funding from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts (£80,000) and the New Forest DC (£60,000).

Whitbread chipped in by leasing the old coach house and the

land for the extension at a peppercorn rent. But while Whitbread adds lustre to its corporate image, the immediate community is hoping for more direct benefits, such as helping village shops to compete with the supermarkets; the doctor's surgery manager hopes to be able to use some of the workshops for "art therapy".

In any case ArtSway will have to generate its own income through rents on studio space, commission on sales, art workshops and conferences "not necessarily on art subjects". But there will be no admission charges for exhibitions nor, Fredericks insists, will ArtSway turn itself into yet another New Forest souvenir shop.

Fredericks is aware of the difficulty of keeping ArtSway simultaneously "accessible" and at the leading edge of art practice. Expressing this symbiosis, the opening exhibition, *Marking Presence*, from January 31, will be of drawings by well established artists (including Deanna Pefferbridge, Bill Woodrow and Alison Wilding) plus a video projection of local people telling their own stories — by artist-in-residence Julie Myers.

ArtSway should succeed in pioneering an entirely new type of showcase for younger professional artists in rural areas. Its larger aim of creating an exchange of ideas with the surrounding community will be harder to achieve.

A guide to the best available recordings presented in conjunction with Radio 3

HANSEL AND GRETEL
Reviewed by Rodney Milnes
HUMPERDINCK'S fairytale opera is conceived orchestrally on a Wagnerian scale, so in terms of a recording you need to hear everything that's going on in the score. For that reason historic versions in mono have to be discarded from the nine currently available.

Among the early stereo sets, the EMI recording under André Cluytens boasts fine playing from the Vienna Philharmonic, and the RCA version under Kurt Eichhorn has perhaps the best Gretel of all in Helen Donath. But there are also drawbacks in both casts. John Pritchard's recording on CBS is disappointingly ill-balanced but has a mesmerising Witch in Elisabeth Söderström.

The most recent version (1992) is conducted by Donald Runnicles on Teldec and his Witch, Hanna Schwarz, is also outstanding. He also has a lovely Gretel in Ruth Ziesak, but strident parents and a sonorous but faceless Hansel. Jeffrey Tate's fine recording on EMI is compromised by a



dull Witch but has good children and equally good parents. The version under Georg Solti (DECCA 421 111-2, 2-CD, £29.99) has marvellous playing by the Vienna Philharmonic, Lucia Popp and Brigitte Fassbaender as the children; and a matchless Sandman from Norma Burrowes. The Philips set under Colin Davis (1992) with the Dresden Staatskapelle is outstanding: their playing is slick and fine-tuned. The cast — Edita Gruberova, Ann Murray, Gwyneth Jones, Franz Grundheber and Christa Ludwig — is hard to beat. If settle for Solti on Decca, it is because conductor, cast and orchestra are fully engaged in the drama, whereas Davis can sound slightly detached.

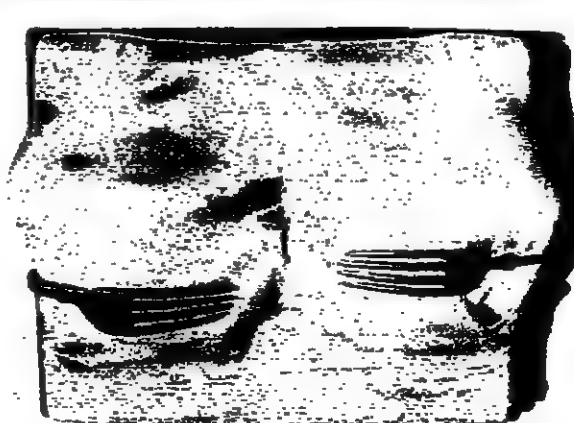
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Next Saturday on Radio 3 (9am): Ravel's *Mirrors*

ANYONE who supposes that "contemporary artists' books" are likely to be, well, books as we normally know them is in for a shock at Speck Studios. The title of the exhibition is *By Its Cover*, and indeed one should be very wary of judging any of these books by its cover — even supposing that you could safely distinguish the cover and work out how to open or close it. You might, for example, find that Patricia Collins's *Breakfast Book* turns out, disappointingly, to contain a bacon and egg on toast, and even the sauce bottle to go with it. Matt's *Brainwaves from JJ*, in the proper Surrealist fashion, cradles a bra with two forks. Not all the artists are quite so civilised. Some do John Latham-ish things with books cut up, burnt and otherwise destroyed before being reconstructed in quasi-sculptural form. The last thing you could do here is actually read anything. But after all, the world is full of libraries.

Speck Studios, 17 Rylston Road, SW6 (0171-386 0095) Tues-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 11am-3pm, until Friday.

IT IS tempting to compare the photographer Charles Hoff to the painter Sam Rabin. Both have concentrated to an extraordinary degree in their work on the prize fight. And both seem to be less interested in the human drama of the fight game than in its formal qualities. Hoff's primary concern at the outset must have been reportage,

ABOUT THE LONDON GALLERIES



The properly Surreal *Brainwave from JJ* by Mali

capturing the climactic moments, the agony and the ecstasy. But news value seems rapidly to have been replaced by an almost sculptural sense of the relationship of one massive form to another. An element of heroic exaggeration is perhaps almost inevitable in any picture taken from floor-level looking up. And yet these boxes appear more often painfully vulnerable than heroically heroic.

SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHERS COMPANY, 21 Kensington Park Road, W11 (0171-221 3699), Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 11am-5pm, until Jan 18.

FACED even a very few years ago with the prospect of a show by six Polish sculptors from the Gdansk Academy of Fine Arts, one would have

known just what to expect. Now, with all of Western art opened like an oyster to artists of the former Eastern bloc, it is impossible even to guess. In the event, the sculptors of the Gdansk Group, showing at the Polish Cultural Institute as an early contribution to next year's celebration of the Gdansk millennium, prove to go off very much each in his or her own direction. Stanislaw Radwanski, the teacher and leader of the group, is the most consciously virtuosic, proving that he can carve marble or cast bronze as well as any modern master. Among the younger members, Mariusz Bialecki comes up with a particularly beguiling idea for his *Self Portrait*, carving it very approximately in wood, and then marking out the

features in pencil. Dabrowka Tyndevica makes the most ceramic bas-reliefs of mountain formations are intensely memorable. Polish Cultural Institute, 34 Portland Place, W1 (0171-636 6032), Mon-Fri 10am-6pm (Thurs to 5pm), until Jan 20.

THIS year again Chris Beetles is offering his regular holiday season *bonne bouche* of *The Illustrators*, representing British illustration from 1780 to date. As usual the main weight of the show, which features some 500 items, falls in the late Victorian and early modern era, the so-called heyday of the giftbook and coloured illustration *à la* Arthur Rackham and Heath Robinson. There is enough of both these artists to satisfy the most demanding collector. But Beetles is also very skilled at rooting out lesser-known artists of comparable interest and skill: Helen Jacobs's image of Ariel on a bar's back is quite worthy of Rackham, and William M. Tiffin's *The Treasure Ships* is in tune with Masfeliand romance. If your taste goes to recent cartoonist/illustrators like Giles or Larry or Quentin Blake, those requirements too can be satisfied. And the catalogue is, as ever, a Christmas gift in itself. Chris Beetles, 8 & 10 Ryder Street, SW1 (0171-839 7551), Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, until Jan 25.

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The ancient finders-keepers principle is being lost. Gary Slapper reports



Whose treasure now?

They may not realise it, but children who gleefully and defiantly dig about "finders-keepers" are citing one of the oldest maxims of English law. Now much of the ancient regulation governing treasure trove — established by common law — has been quietly reorganised by the Treasure Act 1996 and, when it comes into force, some of the legal landscape relatively untouched since 1265 will be significantly altered.

A code of practice governing the reporting of discoveries was published in December by the Department of National Heritage, inviting comments from interested parties, and the Act will come into force this year, once Parliament approves the code.

There are about 30,000 metal detector enthusiasts in Britain, who find 400,000 items a year. The National Council of Metal Detecting says that many of its members will give up the hobby because there will no longer be any incentive.

The principle evolved before the establishment of banks was that wealth hidden from the King would revert to the Crown. Under the old law (which will still apply to items found before the Act comes into force), anything discovered that is made of a "substantial" proportion of gold or silver must be reported to the local coroner, who will hold an inquest with a jury. If the property appears to have been concealed by the original owner with a view to later recovery, and now has no known owner, it is treasure trove — it belongs to the Crown by prerogative. In practice, the items will then go to the British Museum, the National Museum of Wales or the Environment Department in

Northern Ireland, which will pay the "market value" to the finder. Valuations are carried out by the Treasure Trove Reviewing Committee.

The trouble with this, for museum curators and archaeologists, is that some splendid finds, which are not precious metal — such as the Middleham jewel, valued at £2,500,000 — are not protected as treasure trove and thus can fall into private hands. It was fortunate that the refusal of an export licence prevented that find from leaving the country.

The same lack of protection also applies to anything, even precious metal, found to have been lost rather than hidden, and to all sorts of gemstones and pottery, hidden or not. If

he treasure trove, the coroner must deliver it to the property entitled person or, if there are rival claimants, invite them to make proceedings to determine rightful ownership. In practice, this means that a finder will often be able to sell the object to the highest bidder, which is often a private interest rather than a British museum.

One serious problem with using coroners' inquests in these cases is that the jury's verdict is not conclusive and disputes over legal rights can be litigated in the civil courts.

This is something that Ian Fletcher painfully discovered. In 1995, Mr Fletcher using a metal detector in Farnham, Surrey, discovered a medieval

the land were acts of trespass which, in any event, together with metal detecting, were not recreational pursuits permitted by the park rules.

The main purpose of the coroner's inquest into treasure trove is to preserve artefacts for their archaeological or historical interest. The procedure seems defective, however, because so many objects of historical value, such as gemstones, pottery, and cloth fall outside the current definition. And to be classified as treasure trove (and thus end up in a museum), the object needs to be something that was deliberately concealed in times past. So many objects that look as though they were simply lost or abandoned are allowed to fall into private ownership.

The new Act, replacing the old common law, covers many-made objects and is intended to extend the protection currently afforded to gold and silver objects to a wider range of archaeological finds and to remove some of the anachronisms of the existing law. When its provisions come into force, the Treasure Act will cover all hoards of coins at least 300 years old with a gold or silver content of at least 10 per cent (or less if there are more than ten coins). The Act will also apply to objects at least 300 years old with a precious metal content of at least 10 per cent, and other materials and objects found in archaeological association with the treasure.

The most important change, though, will be the absence of need to determine why objects came to be buried in the ground. They will thus have the status of treasure even if they were lost, abandoned or buried in a grave. A new

Treasure Valuation Committee will advise on *ex-gratia* payments to be made to finders. Objects not included in the new definition of treasure are termed "portable antiquities" and reporting of these will be on a voluntary basis.

The Act also says that treasure inquests shall normally be held without a jury and creates a new criminal offence of failing to report potential treasure to a coroner within 14 days of the find. Treasure seekers who fail to report a find will face three months' jail, fines of up to £5,000 or both. The Act thus largely undermines the finders-keepers principle. In theory, the museum-using public will be saved from being losing weepers in future cases of uncovered treasure.

Dr Gary Slapper is principal lecturer in law at Staffordshire University.

The prosecution of their profession

Will solicitors win rights of audience in higher courts?

The senior judges of England and Wales are now locked in debate over whether to allow solicitors employed in the Crown Prosecution Service the right to prosecute cases in the Crown Court. The decision of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, after taking account of their views, is expected in the next few weeks. The decision will mark the end of a battle that has been waged at least since the Lord Chancellor published his *Green Papers* proposing reform of the legal profession and the abolition of lawyers' monopolies, including that of the bar in the higher courts.

If the decision is in favour of limited rights for employed solicitors it will put in place the final keystone for the CPS, which has lobbied for extended advocacy rights since the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 raised the prospect.

Earlier this year, in the Appellate Court in Adelaide, a lawyer employed by South Australia's Director of Public Prosecutions, argued in that court on an interlocutory matter without any apparent difficulty. Indeed, the irony of the case, to me, was that the advocate in question was a former solicitor employed by the CPS in England. If such matters can be dealt with adequately in similar jurisdictions, what is unique about our jurisdiction, where everyone has the vapours as soon as the prospect of similar rights of audience is mentioned?

We are told that one of the problems would be a lack of objectivity and independence, the implication being that state employees are unlikely to have such qualities. This is an unattractive suggestion and one that defies logical analysis. Who is likely to be the more independent and objective — the advocate who is hired temporarily but looks, and hopes, for more work in the future and perhaps performs accordingly, or the one who is secure in his employment and perhaps, therefore, is the less concerned about the outcome? After all, the prosecutor's task is merely to present competently and fairly the facts of a matter to the jury and the court. The outcome should be — and, I suspect, nearly always is — a matter of indifference whether he be employed or self-employed.

It is said that a further reason is the issue of disclosure of evidence. Yet the past 25 years are littered with cases where inadequate disclosure has been a problem and where the prosecutor has been not an employed lawyer

but self-employed counsel. The history surrounding disclosure of evidence, therefore, seems to be as much in favour of change as a retention of the present system.

An irony of this particular debate is that, of course, in some areas the CPS already has the rights of audience it seeks elsewhere. In the West Country, burglaries committed on one side of the River Tamar — in Cornwall — can be dealt with by an advocate employed by the CPS who has a right of audience in *Truro* Crown Court and exercises it. If the burglaries are committed on the other side of the river, in Plymouth, that privilege is not open to the CPS. Such is the current logic.

One should then turn to the issue of the CPS budget. There would be an enormous and immediate saving on the budget if it were able to be selective in the cases handed to counsel on the ground of need rather than because of a restrictive practice. That issue of the savings is usually skirted over delicately, one notices, by those proposing the continuation of the present system.

This country is unique in having a CPS that cannot exercise the normal rights of audience, common to most other such services elsewhere. It may have made sense for that to be the case at the initiation of the service but, now that it has established itself as well as improved its stature, the next step must surely beckon. It cannot seriously be suggested that for the next decade it should be locked into a system more akin to a prosecuting solicitors department than a CPS.

If nothing else, both the career structure of those employed in the service as well as those suffering from the budget constraints imposed by the present arrangements deserve better. For whatever else may be the case, to use employed lawyers as advocates, in the higher courts will, inevitably, produce greater savings and therefore a more effective use of whatever budget is, or is likely to be, available.

That is not to say that there should not be a mix. Continued use of advocates from outside the CPS will always be a feature. In that way, the service obtains the best of both worlds. What is now needed is rational argument of the benefits and drawbacks of change as well as a realisation that the status quo cannot continue for very much longer.

The author is senior partner of Font & Bowden, solicitors.



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Memoir of a legend

THE LATE Lord Devlin is considered one of the greatest judges of his time. He died aged 86 in 1992 before finishing his autobiography. But his account of his early years at the Bar before he became a QC has now been published. Taken at the Flood (Tavener Publications, £11 hardback, incl. p&p) makes a compelling read.

It contains tributes from Cardinal Hume, Sir Ludovic Kennedy and Lord Scarman, who together worked to rectify the wrongful convictions of the Guildford Four and McGuire Seven. The book should encourage students battling for a place at the Bar. Devlin himself had a difficult start and nearly gave up. He managed to obtain an apprenticeship with Withers & Co. then



Lord Devlin: one of the greats

was chosen to "devil" for William Jowitt, the Attorney-General, joining his Brick Court chambers. Devlin first came to public notice as junior counsel in a famous murder case.

Salaries are up for lawyers at all levels and across all

subjects, according to Quarry Douglas's latest survey. Banking and finance, corporate and property are the areas drawing the highest salaries.

Opening the book

THE 1997 edition of *Passport*, the award-winning pocket guide to the law for young people, will be launched on Thursday by the Citizenship Foundation. "Ignorance of the law," the charity says, "is widespread. For many people, particularly the young, the law is a closed book — to be used not by them but against them."

The book gives practical guidance on the law in every area of life encountered by young people, from drugs to

driving and police powers to part-time work.

A free copy has gone to every secondary school and sixth-form college in England and Wales. Price: 99p for bulk orders. Details: Tony Thorpe, editor, 01777 700220.

Objections

THE long-running battle over the use of two lawyers in court goes on. In the latest move, the Lord Chancellor's Department is about to finalise legal aid regulations to restrict attendance by defence solicitors on defence counsel in Crown Court hearings. The regulations will cover simple trials or hearings.

Douglas Day, QC, of the Bar Council, says the regulations are being brought in despite objections from the Bar Council, the Council of Circuit Judges and the Chief Taxing Master.

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The Legal 500, The Clients' Guide to UK Law Firms, 1996.

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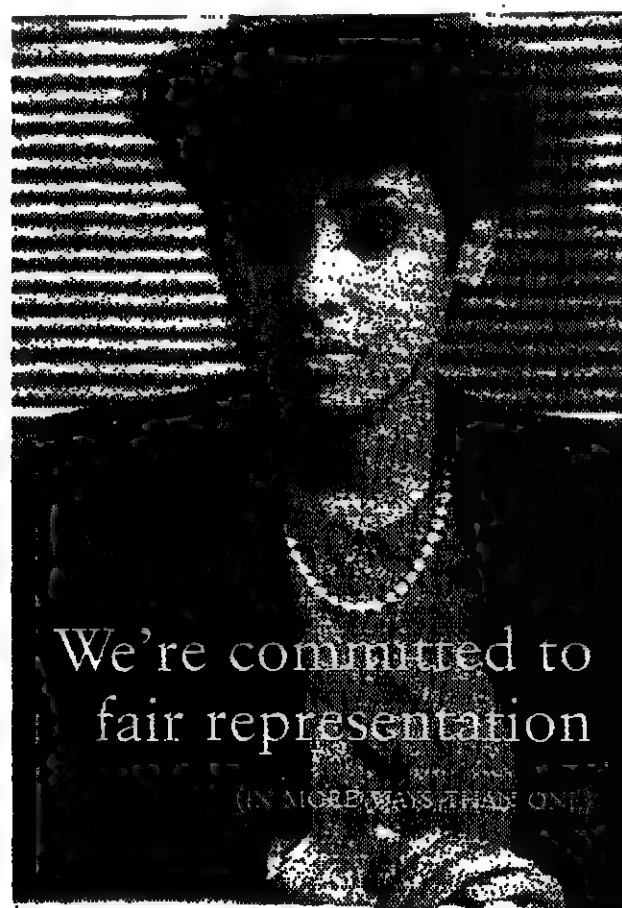
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James Morton dips into a potpourri of porridge talk (left), rich in modern drug terms, and (below) enjoys some legal fiction

In the words of the prisoner...

Several years ago, when I was starting to undertake criminal cases, I asked a client about his alibi. "Going case, wasn't it?" he replied. I looked sheepish and asked what it meant. He looked at me as though I was a country cousin and replied: "Going case... going case with a mystery?"

Going case comes from old slang for a brothel and is to sleep with a girl, and a mystery is a girl, possibly though not conclusively from the phrase "It's a mystery how she's still a virgin". Another suggestion is that "mystery" is rhyming slang and comes from the old radio show that featured a "mystery word". The rhyming slang would follow with word rhyming with bird and the actual rhyme being dropped.

Though neither "going case" nor "mystery" actually appear in Angela Devlin's *Prison Patter* (Water-side Press, £13.50), the other 2,500 entries should prevent young solicitors, magistrates, probation officers and even magistrates from asking questions that disrupt the narrative. (I once saw a magistrate bemused by a defendant who asked to "go for a Jimmy".)

The blurb claims, incorrectly, that the book is the first dictionary of words and slang from prisons. The first, *Lags Lexicon*, was in fact published some years ago. In the late 1980s, if I may mention it immodestly, my book *Low Speak* covered much the same ground. Of

course, prison slang, just like ordinary slang, has changed over the years and now much of the book is devoted to the names of various types of drugs and drug-taking, something almost completely absent from the *Lags Lexicon*. Even the definitions appear to have changed. Of course, slang, particularly criminal slang, is a living language. For example, "Mary Jane" used to be marijuana but is now rhyming slang for cocaine. This directory of drug slang is, perhaps, the most useful function of the book.

For the general reader or a lawyer who does not simply want to use the book as a reference, there are amusing inconsistencies. Much of the fun of such a compilation is discovering how words and phrases came into use. Here, sometimes only partial explanations and definitions are given. "Brief" is listed as a lawyer, especially a barrister, and a search warrant. It also means both a cheque and a driving licence. In the case of "hooker" meaning prostitute, it is now more accepted that the word comes from the solicitation of the client or even the area of New York in which 19th-century prostitution flourished than from the eponymous American Civil War general suggested by Ms Devlin. Some origins are explained; others not. Partridge's *Dictionary of the Underworld* has not been updated for some years. Perhaps the time is ripe for a new dictionary.



"Cell Spin", slang for a surprise cell search. The cartoon, from *Prison Patter*, is by a former prisoner

Let this new heroine live

Once it was impossible to find a crime novel with authentic courtroom details. American and, to their shame, English writers believed that in this country judges ask counsel to "approach the bench". Usually, the Byzantine American criminal justice system was beyond novelists' understanding. Things have changed, thanks to courtroom TV and writers such as Scott Turow, Jonathan Davies (British) and Steve Martini (American). The last two are trial lawyers and each has produced a thriller based on the all-too-often correct premise that the prosecution does not disclose its hand to the defence as it should.

In *Undisclosed Material* (Coronet, £5.99) Jonathan Davies, a barrister and judge, reintroduces Jeremy Scott, hero of his first novel. This time, Scott is embroiled with Jolyon Scribner, a judge who is keen to ensure not only that the defendants are found guilty, but also that in cases using informants, these witnesses are protected in every possible way. Little by little, Scott finds that the judge is probably being over-zealous and, indeed, has potentially unhealthy links with the officer in two seemingly unrelated cases.

In Steve Martini's *The Judge* (Headline, £5.99), the latest in his series, Armando Acosta, the judge who has clashed over the years in novels with the defence lawyer Paul Madriani, starts in fine form, conducting an inquiry into the funds of a police union. Soon, things become unpleasant. Judge Acosta is accused of soliciting an undercover policewoman for prostitution.

In recent years, American courtroom thrillers have tended to

depart from reality, with district attorneys defending their sons and cross-examining their other children, but Martini has a good explanation of why Judge Acosta should end up being defended by Madriani after the woman is found beaten to death in her flat.

Madriani is assisted by the broken-down lawyer Harry Hinds and hindered by Leonore Goya, formerly of the district attorney's office. Scott is helped by Catherine, an American and one of the army of part-time clerks used by lawyers to sit behind counsel in criminal trials. In both novels, the heroes come into possession of evidence withheld by police and court, and it is instructive to see how each deals with the problem. Publishers have decided that courtroom scenes are not in themselves sufficient to sell books and that there must be some sort of chase sequence. Scott goes to Wales; Madriani and Leonore take a walk through the old courtroom.

These novels are at their best when the heroes are locked in procedure and cross-examination. There is a fine sequence in *The Judge* when a child witness is examined; and Davies has already shown that he has a good ear for the nuances of a testy Crown Court judge going nowhere.

As with Davies's first book, there is, for legal London, the added enjoyment in *Undisclosed Material* of unlocking the roman-d-claf. The next problem for Martini will be the conflict of interest which may arise from Madriani appearing in front of the judge who has been his client. For Davies, it is that Catherine is all too engaging and spunky a heroine to be dumped in the next book.

James Morton is editor of *New Law Journal*.

Healing the heartbreak at tinsel time

MOST PEOPLE would say that the festive season is a time for families. It conjures up pictures of open log fires, children playing around the Christmas tree, roasting chestnuts and, of course, the Christmas spirit. But there are many for whom this period is a painful and isolated time of year, when families simply cannot be close.

For divorcees with children, the festive season can be the loneliest time of the year, because one or other partner has to be without the children. But all

parties are suffering. One parent is lonely, the other feels guilty and the children are going through emotional pressure and a painful separation. And in the aftermath, matrimonial lawyers throughout Britain experience a surge of inquiries about divorce. So what about a different, positive approach to the holiday next year?

Our firm advises couples on practical ways to cope with the problems the season can bring. People have to accept that there can never be another traditional Christmas once divorce has happened. The easiest way to cope is to accept the situation and to find new ways in which to celebrate. One option is for divorced couples to

arrange mutually convenient dates for giving the children a second or alternative Christmas. Our family did this one year when we wanted to go skiing. We picked a weekend close to Christmas and made Friday evening Christmas Eve, Saturday Christmas Day and Sunday Boxing Day. It was a great success. Many people now go away for

"turkey and tinsel" weekends and are used to the idea. In later years, after divorcing, we have adopted the same philosophy - so that the children could see their father over Christmas and so that we could still have a Christmas together as a family. Our firm believes in the "holistic" approach to divorce: it also offers tailor-

made counselling sessions for clients, as well as for their children.

So next year, think about an alternative celebration. It saves a lot of problems, moving children on Christmas and Boxing Day and the feeling of breaking up the event, which occurs when children go off to visit absent parents.

DIANE BENUSSI

The author is founder of Benussi & Co., of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

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Oliver Holt profiles the man in charge of restoring strict discipline at Benetton

Symonds puts faith in appliance of science



Their mechanics make a point of leaning at the models whom the team parade around the paddock and drinking each other under the table. Flavio Briatore, their managing director, is a bon vivant with an all-year-round tan and a propensity for clowning around. The Benetton team and a sense of discipline, it might seem, go together like Michael Schumacher and a row of speed bumps.

Perversely, though, discipline was always Benetton's strong suit in the championship years with Schumacher, the quality that the other teams envied. It was there in the pit stops mainly, in the attention to detail, measuring to the inch where the car should stop, practising the drill over and over again in the car park at their factory in Enstone. In the dogged nature of their testing methods, too, they set the standard.

Last season, when Schumacher left for Ferrari, Gerhard Berger and Jean Alesi, a couple of new boys, joined the class and, in their eagerness to help them to settle in, the teachers let the discipline slip. It showed even at the first race of the year, in Melbourne, when Alesi overshot his mark in the pits and knocked over one of his mechanics. Neither driver won a race all season.

When Ross Brawn, the technical director, and Rory Byrne, the chief designer, left at the end of the season, it could have led to even more disruption to the old routine. Instead, Briatore appointed Pat Symonds in Brawn's place. A chain-smoker, quiet and reflective, he makes an odd kind of disciplinarian, but the team's old ways, he says, are the best ways.

"Alesi and Berger had spent a long time at Ferrari before they came to us last year," Symonds said. "At the start they were very much into this Ferrari mentality of 'Let's do short runs in testing, let's put new tyres on, let's go quick', rather than fully understanding the discipline of the experimental techniques needed in testing."

"It may seem a bit precious, but we were two-time world champions and we had taken on two drivers who, even though they were of a high public standing, had not



Symonds is confident that Benetton can be a competitive Formula One team again this season, without making any drastic changes. Photograph: Marc Aspland

actually won many races between them. We are a very disciplined team and, in our will to please our new drivers, we lost some of our discipline. I am not implying criticism of the drivers. It is just that, when they were at Ferrari, they did things a different way.

"As a team, we grew up with Michael Schumacher. We found ways of doing things together that suited us. He was an extremely disciplined driver, a highly intelligent driver. When we tested, our tendency was to do long-distance testing to check and recheck."

"Last year there was a bit of a tendency to chip and change, to test something once over three-laps and say 'That's better', and commit ourselves to it for the next race before we were really aware of all the implications of it."

"We have rules and procedures that we apply throughout the team and which have stood us in good stead over a number of years. I think we forgot a few of those procedures last year and we paid the price. Our aim now is to bring a bit of discipline back to the team. We have already put things back on an even keel a bit and we need to build on that, build on our relationship with our drivers and try to get ourselves back in a winning position."

Symonds has been with the team since 1981, before they were even called Benetton, back in the Tolman days. He was Schumacher's race engineer throughout the five years that he was there and by his side when he won his two world championships. Later, he has also been in charge of research and development, gradually being

moved into a position where he could take over from Brawn.

He does not see the need to introduce wholesale changes, preferring evolution to revolution, but he is an engineering man through and through, a technician and a scientist, the antithesis of someone like Briatore, whose gift is marketing and public relations. Symonds is driven by the desire to master the intricacies of his sport.

"I want to impose a new kind of discipline on the team," Symonds said. "I am essentially a scientific engineer. My background is the

theoretical side of engineering, the mathematics, the experimental techniques. I want to impose the discipline associated with those techniques into our circuit experimentation. A circuit test is like any other scientific experiment. There is an object to doing it and conclusions that have to be drawn after you have done it, which includes an assessment of your errors and the techniques you have used."

If Alesi, in particular, can assimilate some of this iron discipline into his testing and his driving, marry it with his over-generous helpings of flair and emerge, at last, a more complete driver, perhaps Benetton have a chance of revisiting the glory days that they enjoyed with Schumacher some short time ago.

"Last year was the worst year we have had for many years," Symonds

said, "so it is an over-simplification to say we want to do better than that because that is not really much of an objective; but I am optimistic we can return to our winning ways."

"We have a much better understanding of our drivers now and, rather than produce a revolutionary new car, we have concentrated on the detail of some aspects we were not happy with. We have already moved a step forward and if we couple that with a more disciplined approach, we will have a successful season."

Even Symonds's definition of success, though, has a puritanical ring to it. "I would class success as chasing the championship throughout the year," he said. "Whether we ultimately win it or not, if we are in there to the end, I would feel we had made major improvements."

TOMORROW

Why time is running out for Gerhard Berger to win a world championship

IN BRIEF

Greyhound racing's last stand at Hackney

GREYHOUND racing at the London Stadium in Hackney, one of the sport's most famous venues, has ended after nearly 65 years. The stadium went into receivership in 1995 after £10 million had been spent on refurbishing the main stand. Price Waterhouse, the receivers, is expecting to complete the sale of the site for housing development next month.

Frank Melville, the chief executive of the National Greyhound Racing Club, said that the closure was a "terrible blow". Only about 35 stadiums in Great Britain now stage the sport.

Grange take title

Hockey: Grange, the Scottish National League champions, captured the senior title in the Los Reyes international club tournament in Barcelona yesterday. They finished with a 6-1 win over Pedralbes, from Spain, with Donald McFarlane scoring a hat-trick. Reading, the overnight leaders and favourites, could come only third, despite a brave recovery which earned a 2-2 draw against El Cid, the Spanish under-21 squad.

Norman still top

Golf: Greg Norman has broken Nick Faldo's record for consecutive weeks as world No 1 in the Sony rankings after his victory over Scott Hoch in the Andersen Consulting world championship in Arizona on Sunday. Norman has spent the past 82 weeks at the top and is the only player to have been ever-present in the top ten since the rankings were introduced in 1986.

Reid's defence

Boxing: Robin Reid will face a knockout specialist in the first defence of his World Boxing Council super-middleweight title at the London Arena on February 8. Reid meets the unbeaten Giovanni Pretorius, of South Africa, who has 22 victories to his credit.

Rusedski beaten

Tennis: Greg Rusedski, the No 7 seed and British No 2, lost to Alex Radulescu, of Germany, 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 in the first round of the New Zealand Open in Auckland yesterday.

JUDO

Report censures Atlanta build-up

By JOHN GOODBODY

THE preparations of Great Britain's judo fighters for the Olympic Games in Atlanta last summer have been castigated in an official report published yesterday. The investigation describes the final weeks before the Games as "very badly organised", states that Neil Adams, the chief coach, had "lost the respect of the vast majority of the team" and that the management structure in Atlanta was "inefficient".

Adams's future role will be settled after a meeting with George Kerr, the British Judo Association (BJA) chairman, on January 25. However, it is expected that he will lose his dominant position when a

the 13 team members, all of the coaching and support staff and personal coaches, and read 30 written contributions. Of the attitude at the Games, the report said: "There was a general failure of the senior staff to accept responsibility and there was liberal evidence of appalling misunderstandings or miscommunications." It added that no team meetings were held in Atlanta and "no attempt was made to raise the morale or to bring the team together when it had become apparent that things were going badly".

Considering that it is an official BJA report, the findings are embarrassing for Kerr himself, because he was the team manager in Atlanta. This is increased by the comment that several examples were given of "inappropriate public behaviour" by officials and fighters.

The panel said that Adams "lost the respect of the vast majority of the team" through his narrow approach to technique work, his disregard for the needs of the individual judo competitors and for input from the personal coaches. This was not helped by his fundamental shortfall in communication awareness.

Adams, the most successful male competitor in British judo history, said yesterday that he was "very choked and disillusioned" and described his position as "being in limbo".

"What has come out since the Games is a shame," he said. "There is a lot of bitterness. It is horrible for me because judo is a sport I love."

He accepted that he had "lost contact with the competitors and team morale had dipped". He described the qualifying process before the Games as "horrible". Britain qualified 13 fighters in the 14 weight categories, more than any other country except Japan and France, who finished first and second, respectively, in the judo medals table.



Adams: disillusioned

director of elite performance is appointed under new guidelines for funding by the National Lottery.

The report was commissioned by the BJA in September after the failure to continue the consistent run of success at the previous six Olympic Games, in which Britain had won 15 medals. Although the BJA had forecast that five medals would be won in 1996, none were.

The inquiry panel, consisting of Colin McIVER, the 1984 Olympic coach, Kevin Hickey, the technical director of the British Olympic Association, and Adrian Moorhouse, the former Olympic swimming champion, interviewed ten of

CRICKET: ALL-ROUNDER PROPELS SOUTH AFRICA TO OVERWHELMING TRIUMPH

India hooked by McMillan

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK IN CAPE TOWN

NEWLANDS (final day of five): South Africa beat India by 282 runs

TO ALL intents and purposes, South Africa had made sure of victory in the second Test match by the end of the fifth over here yesterday. That was as long as it took them to get rid of Sachin Tendulkar and Mohammad Azharuddin and, without anything from either of them, India were doomed. They lost eventually 40 minutes into the afternoon.

Inside a fortnight, therefore, South Africa have settled this three-match series and avenged the defeat that they suffered in the reciprocal series in India before Christmas. Except when Tendulkar and Azharuddin were laying about them in such style on Saturday, India were badly outplayed and it will be an agreeable surprise if they fare a lot better in the last Test match, which starts in Johannesburg on Thursday next week.

Tendulkar's dismissal so soon yesterday morning was a great disappointment, not only for when it happened but also, for such a mature and marvellous player, for the manner of it.

Cronje started his bowling with Donald and McMillan, with McMillan signalling his intention of inviting Tendulkar to hook by posting two long legs for him. The first time he did so he put his considerable bulk behind the delivery and Tendulkar, who had yet to play himself in, was

late with his stroke: Klusener, running some way to his right at mid-on, took a skied catch out of the sun.

Eight balls later Donald had Azharuddin caught at third slip off a shortish ball that left him. What followed was of purely academic interest.

Ganguly played nicely for the best part of two hours before being caught at slip by McMillan off Pollock and Laxman for slightly longer before running out of partners. Whereupon McMillan was made man of the match.

Besides taking the most prized wicket yesterday, he had made 103 not out and 59 not out and held his 38th slip catch in 27 Test matches, a ratio that is well up with the Chappells, Walter Hammond and Ian Botham and all the other most eminent slip-catchers apart from Bobby Simpson, whose 110 Test catches came in only 62 matches.

Most of McMillan's have come, unusually, at second slip, one of those betwixt and between places where some prefer to watch the bat and some to watch the ball. McMillan, I gather, prefers to

watch the bat. His Test batting average of 43.9, going in almost always at six or seven, is also three clear points higher than anyone else to have played for South Africa since their readmission. The balance that he gives their side is inestimably valuable.

It is difficult to be sanguine about India's prospects, not only in Johannesburg but also in the Caribbean, where they go next. They came here with no time to adjust to what for the most part is quite a different game from the one that they play at home.

Although obviously gifted, Raman, who is opening their innings at the moment, is finding the pace and bounce altogether baffling and it is asking an awful lot of Dravid and Ganguly to bat at three and four respectively.

As was bound to happen, they have found runs infinitely harder to come by since starting their Test careers so propitiously in England last summer.

Tendulkar came in at No 5 on Sunday evening and he must surely bat higher than that, especially as he said that he sees this as a learning tour

for a side with an average age of only 25. Despite his wonderful batting on Saturday, he is in a good deal of pain with a strained side, but the more his young proteges can bat with him at the other end, the more quickly they will improve. Something is sure to rub off on them, besides the confidence that he transmits.

The total attendance for this Test match, of 74,577, was a record for Newlands, partly because the old ground did not have the same capacity. This is more than Perth or Brisbane or Edgbaston or Headingley or Karachi (unless India happen to be playing there) normally get for a Test match, and more than England had here a year ago through their failure to make their match last beyond the third day.

Starved of proper Test cricket for so long, the South African public are now warming to a side that is winning a lot more matches than it loses. Cronje described it yesterday as "a world-class unit" and Tendulkar as "top side in the world". The latter view will be put to the test when Australia come here next month.

Things, though, are certainly getting back to what they were in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when South Africa won six of their last eight home Tests against Australia. The success that they enjoyed then first aroused the active interest of the Afrikaners; just as encouragingly, the non-white faces to be seen at Newlands these past few days were probably sufficient in themselves to make the difference between the old attendance record and the new one.

SCOREBOARD FROM CAPE TOWN

SOUTH AFRICA: First Innings: 520 for 7 (60 min)		A Kumble c Richardson b Adams 14	
R M McMillan 102 not out, D J Cullinan 77		D Ganga b Donald 15	
Second Innings: 286 for 6 (40 min)		J Srinivasan c Adams 0	
M A C Henson 55, Cullinan 55		Extras: (lb 1, w 2, nb 5) 8	
INDIA: First Innings: 259 (8 hr)		Total 144	
M Azharuddin 115		FALL OF WICKETS: 1-7, 2-26, 3-42, 4-59, 5-61, 6-87, 7-115, 8-121, 9-144	
Second Innings		BOWLING: Donald 18-5-40-3, Pollock 12-2-23-2, Klusener 9-3-13-0, McMillan 11-4-16-1, Adams 10-3-4-6-3	
W V Laxman c Richardson b Pollock 16		Man of the match: B M McMillan	
R M McMillan c Donald 12		Umpires: D G Fair (Australia) and R Kerton (South Africa)	
S C Ganguly c McMillan b Pollock 30			
S R Tendulkar c Klusener b McMillan 9			
M Azharuddin c Henson b Donald 2			
V V S Laxman not out 25			

Nash tops the bill in one-day series victory

THE England Under-19 side established an unassailable lead in the one-day international series with Pakistan by completing a dramatic three-run victory in the second match, in Stalkot yesterday.

David Nash, of Middlesex, was the top scorer in the England innings with 49 in a total of 213 for five in 40 overs. That total was achieved with a four off the last ball of the innings by Gareth Batty, of Yorkshire.

Pakistan were then dismissed for 210 in the final over, with England taking the last five wickets for 11 runs. Hassan Raza was the architect of Pakistan's run chase, hitting a brilliant 90 before becoming the second of two victims for Alex Tudor, the Surrey pace bowler.

England now hold a 2-0 lead in the three-match series, with the final meeting in Karachi on Friday.

Australia were considering taking a gamble on the fitness of Glenn McGrath,

the pace bowler, for the World Series Cup match against Pakistan in Hobart today. McGrath missed the defeat by West Indies on Sunday with an injured knee and was still far from 100 per cent fit.

However, McGrath's availability was seen as vital to Australia's chances of victory after three consecutive defeats left them facing the distinct possibility of failing to qualify for the final, played on a best-of-three basis.

RUGBY UNION

Back makes case for England call

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

EVERN though his diplomatic skills do not match his footballing ability, Neil Back is likely to be among a 30-strong training party to be named by England tomorrow to prepare for the five nations' championship. Back, the Leicester flanker who was suspended for the first ten weeks of this season, stated the strongest of cases for a recall during the Heineken Cup semi-final with Toulouse on Saturday, and England are sorely in need of a specialist on the open side.

The England management team spent the weekend putting the final touches to its senior squad and an A squad, from which will be drawn teams to play Scotland and Ospreys, both on January 31. The last time that a general squad was announced, in November before England's three pre-Christmas internationals, the open sides were Lawrence Dallaglio and Richard Hill, though Dallaglio is now playing blind side for Wasps and Hill missed the chance to impress Jack Rowell, the England coach, at the weekend when injury forced him out of the Saracens team that played Bath.

After the victory over Toulouse, Back aired his concerns about his apparent omission from England's plans. The last of his five caps came against Western Samoa during the 1995 World Cup, but his ball skills and vision for the game have never left him and, with his 28th birthday due next week, there is plenty of mileage left in his tank.

He has admitted that the game on Saturday was the first time this season that he has been fully fit, after straining both hamstrings during his comeback in November. "I'm playing for Leicester to get back into the England squad," he said after scoring one of his club's five tries. "It's a stepping stone to where I want to be."

Leicester, meanwhile, must

prepare for the final against Brive on January 25 in Cardiff. Their success means the postponement of their sixth-round Pilkington Cup tie with Bath, but the fact that it is cup weekend in England and Wales will provide a genuine test of the Heineken Cup as an event in its own right. All the leading Welsh clubs will be involved in Swalec Cup ties and it will be instructive to see how many neutrals will swell the Arms Park crowd for a final involving teams from England and France.

The inaugural final, last year, at the same venue, drew 22,000 but, on that occasion, Cardiff themselves were involved against Toulouse. Fortunately, their Swalec Cup tie on January 25 is away, at Newport, but the principal of a neutral venue is well established in European football; now rugby must come to terms with the same issue.



Back: fully fit again

Wales are likely to name today a new captain for the game against the United States in Cardiff on Saturday. Jonathan Humphreys, who has led the side since last season, was sent off playing for Cardiff against Brive on Sunday and may be persuaded not to appeal against his week's suspension. The Americans play their final warm-up game this evening, against Pontypridd at Cardiff Arms Park.

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Ashton: coaching talent

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